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Beyond the Eye of the Beholder: Perceived Gender Role Departure in Close Relationships

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Beyond the Eye of the Beholder: Perceived Gender Role Departure in Close Relationships

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The purpose of this study was to investigate the phenomenon of perceived gender role departure (PGRD) as it relates to both perceived stigma and individuals' perceptions of their romantic relationships. To accomplish this task, first a novel method for measuring PGRD and its four sub-dimensions (source, type, magnitude, and direction) was advanced and tested for viability among a sample of United States adults (N = 401). Results indicated that the scale was viable. Following this the associations between and among each of the sub-dimensions of PGRD and perceived stigma were investigated. Results indicated that the interaction of source and magnitude was most strongly related to perceived stigma. Then, associations between perceived stigma and individuals' perceptions of their romantic relationships were proposed and tested. Perceived stigma was significantly and negatively associated with investment model variables (commitment, investment, satisfaction, perceived quality of alternatives) and intimacy, and significantly positively associated with relational uncertainty. Finally, a meditational model was proposed, wherein perceived stigma acted to intervene in the relationship between PGRD and individuals' perceptions of their romantic relationship. Perceived stigma was found to significantly mediate the negative association between PGRD and investment model variables, and to significantly mediate the positive association between

PGRD and relational uncertainty. The results of this study are discussed in terms of their potential contributions to biosocial construction theory and also to discourses that resist binary notions of gender. Finally, the potential applicability of the results to designing interventions for individuals or couples who feel that their relationships might be negatively impacted by PGRD are offered.

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Introduction

Gender is a basic organizing construct that constrains and enables opportunities and obstacles for all people (Bussey & Bandura, 1999; Dozier, 2017; Gagné & Tewksbery, 1998). Gender is typically conceived and perceived of in a binary categorization: men and women, and relatedly masculine and feminine persons (Heilman, 2001; Kite, 2001; Lindsey & Zakahi, 2006; Prentice & Carranza, 2002). The exact features and content of binary gender roles vary widely across different physical and social locations (J. Wood, 2000). What remains more constant, though, is that individuals who perform their gender in a way that does not match societal expectations of masculinity and femininity are often punished both materially and socially to varying degrees (Garnets & Pleck, 1979; Gilbert & Rader, 2001; Lapinski, Braz, & Maloney, 2010; Lindsey & Zakahi, 2006; Pleck, 1981, 1995; Rudman, 1998; Simpson, 2015; Wong, Ho, Wang, & Miller, 2016; W. Wood & Eagly, 2013). As such, individuals may feel that departing from societally prescribed gender roles represents a stigmatizing aspect of their identity. This project seeks to investigate the experiences of individuals who perceive that they depart from typical gender roles, with a specific eye towards how this may further be associated with individuals' perceptions of their romantic relationships.

As is the case with almost any scholarly endeavor, thorny ethical, epistemological, theoretical, and methodological issues exist that present challenges in producing valuable knowledge. Indeed, it is sometimes that case that the simplest

questions to ask become the most difficult to answer. For researchers interested in gender, two of the simple questions that still elude definitive answers include: (1) who is a man and who is a woman and, (2) are there differences between those types of people? The popular press does not refrain from proffering its own unequivocal answers to these questions and laypeople seem quite capable of forming their own distinctions along these lines, too (Spence & Buckner, 1995). However, when one turns to the academic literature on the topic of gender and gender differences, one finds that the answers to these questions are far from settled. In fact, they are the subjects of frequent and often fierce debate. What does it mean to be a man? What does it mean to be feminine? Who decides? How did we get to be this way? Are we more similar or different? The simple questions posed above, as well as many others, have provided fertile ground for a robust literature that has spoken with many voices on how to answer these and many other questions related to gender.

Yet the knowledge and value that might be gained from answering these questions are hobbled by a basic flaw in their logic: that gender truly is binary, rather than being an aspect of identity that is both fluid and multiple (Deaux & Major, 1987; Diamond, 2005; Joel, Tarrash, Berman, Mukamel, & Ziv, 2014; Keener & Strough, 2017; Lagaert, Van Houtte, & Roose, 2017; Mehta, 2015; Mehta & Dementieva, 2017; Westbrook & Schilt, 2014). This essentialist view of gender and its associated discussions have been termed the "differences paradigm" (Shields, 2013). Thinking within the differences paradigm rests implicitly or explicitly on the notion that there are only two genders, and that those genders are in some fundamental way exclusive of each other. These notions have

already been criticized for the ways in which they are woefully primitive (Bacchi, 1990; Bluhm, Jacobson, & Maibom, 2012; Eagly, 1998; Fine, 2010; Hare-Mustin & Marecek, 1988). However, use of this reductionist scheme is pervasive both in research and in the real lives of people (Shields, 2008). The result of this frame of mind is a focus on differences rather than similarities, which may serve as a justification for the unequal treatment of people (Morton, Postmes, Haslam, & Hornsey, 2009), and in turn hampers the inertia of progress towards gender equality (England, 2010). As MacKinnon (1987) points out, "Differences are inequality's *post hoc* excuse…its outcome presented as its origin" (p. 8).

How, then, are researchers to make any progress towards disrupting this essentialist frame? There are two perspectives that offer answers to this question. Cohen (1990) remarks that the pace of change in science is frustratingly slow. However, Cohen remains optimistic that the consistent generation of research that contributes to a certain point can eventually lead to meaningful change, though that change is often years or decades away. Kuhn (1962), in a landmark piece on the philosophy of science, argues a different view. In the view of Kuhn, science moves in tectonic shifts, not gradual drifts. Progress is not incremental, but rather occurs suddenly and quickly as powerful evidence is generated to support one point or the other. The task of this piece aligns more with the views of Kuhn than Cohen. While patience may be a virtue, the social problems that improved discourses on gender and gender differences can address are problems that can wait no longer. This project also takes a cue from Weisstein (1993) here. She noted that since the second wave feminist revolution of the 1970s, it seems that the gender

revolution has become, to borrow a phrase, "uneven and stalled" (England, 2010, p. 149). In light of this, Weisstein (1993) calls for us to engage in "activist, challenging, badass feminist" research (p. 244). This project will seek to answer this call by rejecting binary notions of gender and contributing to a new body of knowledge that rejects these notions as well. Shields (2008) states the underlying assumption of this position best when she says, "this approach reflects a belief that science can be beneficial to society and that it is our obligation to study scientifically those problems and issues that bear on real people's lived experience" (p. 309).

This study will seek to match Shield's (2008) call by considering how perceived stigma might act as a mediating mechanism that influences the relationship between gender and the climate of romantic relationships. The study of perceived stigma as it relates to perceived gender role departure is particularly important to communication scholars for at least two reasons. First, the need to belong is a primary human goal that extends across relationship types (Baumeister & Leary; 1995). Of the relationships that humans form to fulfill this goal, adult romantic relationships are among the most consequential (Hazan & Zeifman, 1994; Reis, Clark, & Holmes, 2004). Thus learning more about the ways in which gender, a foundational identity aspect, may affect these relationships seems fundamental to understanding more about how they function. Additionally, gender is an aspect of individuals' identity that can be fluid and multiple, occurring at the sociocultural and relational level (Crawford & Kaufman, 2006; Umberson, Thomeer, & Lodge, 2015). Accordingly, research on gender that separates the social and relational aspects of gender, as this study will seek to do, gives findings

increased specificity and validity, and by extension more useful to activists, clinicians, and laypeople.

Language Matters: Defining Terms

The first task in any meaningful discussion of gender is to clearly define exactly what that term means. It is well recognized that the terms "gender" and "sex" are often used interchangeably, both by laypeople and by scholars (Deaux, 1985; Floyd, 2014; Gentile, 1993; Meyers-Levy & Loken, 2014, Moradi & Parent, 2013). Sex, generally, refers to the genetic combination of chromosomes in human beings and their associated physical manifestations and reproductive functions. Combinations of sex determining chromosomes most commonly come in the pairing XX or XY, though other pairings do exist (Blackless, Charuvastra, Derryck, Fausto-Sterling, Lauzanne, & Lee, 2000; Fausto-Sterling, 1993). The XX pairing of chromosomes generally produces females, and the XY pairing produces males. Put simply, sex refers to matters of biology. Gender refers to something related but quite distinct. Gender refers to the socially created and communicated expectations about individuals that are associated with their observed sex (Eagly & W. Wood, 2013; West & Zimmerman, 1987). Similar to conceptualizations of sexual dimorphism, many gender conceptualizations in the Western world are largely dimorphic as well. Genders in Western cultures are often constructed as binary (men and women) and their associated gender roles are seen as bipolar opposites (masculine and feminine) (Gray, 1992; Heilman, 2001; Shields, 2013; Tannen, 1990; Terman & Miles, 1936; J. Wood, 1993).

The meaning of the term "gender roles" should also be clarified, as understanding what is being referenced in this regard will figure heavily into this project. Gender roles are societally constructed and endorsed beliefs about the attributes and activities that are appropriate and inappropriate for women and men (Eagly, 1987; Eagly & Koenig, 2006; Eagly & W. Wood, 2013). Gender roles encourage conformity and negative social repercussions often accompany deviation from gender roles (Garnets & Pleck, 1979; Gilbert & Rader, 2001; Lapinski, Braz, & Maloney, 2010; Lindsey & Zakahi, 2006; Pleck, 1981, 1995; Rudman, 1998; Simpson, 2015; W. Wood & Eagly, 2013). Gender roles are not separate from, but rather are fundamentally influenced by observable biological sex (W. Wood & Eagly, 2013) as individuals of a given observable sex tend to be socialized into matching gender roles.

In this project, gender roles refer to the aforementioned Western constructs of masculinity and femininity. Researchers have alternatively referred to gender roles as being communal/expressive or agentic/instrumental (Abele, 2003; Deaux & LaFrance, 1998; Ruble & Martin, 1998; Spence & Helmreich, 1978), corresponding to the ideas referenced by femininity and masculinity, respectively. The exact nature of these roles varies tremendously. However, taking a broad view, feminine gender roles are thought to include characteristics such as, "affectionate, cheerful, childlike, compassionate […] warm, yielding" (Prentice & Carranza, 2002, p. 260). Masculine characteristics are thought to include being, "aggressive, ambitious, analytical, competitive, dominant, forceful" (Prentice & Carranza, 2002, p. 260). These gender roles, masculinity and femininity, assume that sex and gender are isomorphic constructs (Hyde & Jaffee, 2000).

That is to say that gender roles are often assumed to correspond to individuals' biological sex, though this is an assumption that is not necessarily true.

Now that sex, gender, and gender roles have all been defined for the purposes of this study, the last term that should be defined is gender identity. Gender identity is closely related to gender roles, but refers to the degree to which individuals internalize and perceive themselves as conforming to their society's meanings for maleness and femaleness or masculinity and femininity (i.e., gender roles)(W. Wood & Eagly, 2015). Now that the meaning of these terms has been specified, they can be put to work in a discussion of the genesis of gender roles and how these roles have gained social force.

GETTING PHYSICAL: BIOSOCIAL CONSTRUCTION THEORY AND SOCIAL NORMS

Biosocial construction theory (W. Wood & Eagly, 2013) is a psychosocial theory that attempts to provide an explanatory lens for some of the life differences which individuals of different genders may experience. The theory suggests that physical differences between the sexes have contributed to the social construction of gender. More specifically, biosocial construction theory contends that women's reproductive capabilities (i.e., gestating and birthing children) and men's (on average) larger size and strength combined with conditions from the physical and social environment thousands of years ago to produce a division of labor that allowed members of each sex to most efficiently contribute to society. Accordingly, females were often placed in roles that required them to raise the children they bore, and males were tasked with jobs of hunting game or farming. As a result of observing men and women participating in different activities based on their sex, societies constructed shared expectations of what it means to

be male and female through a process of inferring personal attributes from behavior. This process of correspondent inference (Gilbert, 1998) contributed to the transformation of these shared expectations into gender roles, which were (and still are) taught to members of society through various processes of socialization.

These processes of socialization have been explained in greater detail by social learning theory (Bandura & Walters, 1963). Shortly after its creation, Mishel (1966) applied the theory's core tenets to gender. In tandem, these writings suggest that observation, imitation, reward, and punishment are key mechanisms that undergird the internalization of gender roles. That is, individuals (particularly young children) observe those around them and choose to imitate some of the behaviors they see based on whether they witness those behaviors being socially rewarded or sanctioned. To aid in the process of behaving in a socially praised manner, children are attuned to the communication of close others for cues or clues as to what their gender is and what actions and attributes are associated with each gender. Children seek to match their actions and attributes with those that they perceive are associated with their own gender, as this experience of consistency is rewarding (Bussey & Bandura, 1999; Kohlberg, 1966). Additionally, adults tend to directly and boldly communicate what behaviors are befitting of boys and girls, making the content of gender roles clear to children. As these gender roles are internalized, they become gender identities.

The Role of Norms

Having discussed the genesis and internalization of gender roles, the question of how these constructs gain social force deserves attention. Gender roles encapsulate a

given society's normative expectations for the attributes and activities that are appropriate for men and women. Norms, which carry normative expectations, may be both collective and perceived (Lapinski & Rimal, 2005). Collective norms are those beliefs that are held by a given community or group at a macro-level. Perceived norms are related to collective norms, but importantly refer individuals' more micro-level perceptions of collective norms. This distinction is important in that it suggests that perceived norms may or may not perfectly reflect collective norms. Still, there is a cycle of reciprocal influence that connects the two. Collective norms are generated, sustained, and altered via individuals' communication of perceived norms, which are precipitated by the presence and communication of collective norms (Bettenhausen & Murninghan, 1985). As is implied by this statement, communication is a key mechanism in the persistence of norms at both the collective and perceived level.

Additionally, norms may be classified as serving injunctive and/or descriptive functions (Lapinski & Rimal, 2005). In the case that a norm is injunctive, a norm serves both a prescriptive and proscriptive role. That is to say that injunctive norms tell individuals both what they should and should not do, and also carry the suggestion that violating these directives may result in social sanction. Connected to the pressures for conformity that injunctive norms place on individuals, descriptive norms refer to what individuals actually do in the face of these pressures (Lapinski & Rimal, 2005). As was the case with the distinction between collective and perceived norms, behaviors reflected in injunctive and descriptive norms may not be identical, as has been suggested by

research on the phenomenon of pluralistic ignorance (Lambert, Kahn, & Apple, 2003; O'Gorman, 1988; Prentice & Miller, 1993).

Insofar as gender roles reflect shared expectations about men and women (Eagly & Koenig, 2006), they constitute collective norms about gender. However, individuals' perceptions of gender roles vary widely both within cultures and across them (J. Wood, 2000), evoking gender roles' dual status as a perceived norm as well. Gender roles can also be understood as injunctive norms, as violating dictates of masculine and/or feminine roles has been shown to be associated with negative social consequences (Garnets & Pleck, 1979; Bosson & Michniewicz, 2013; Gagné & Tewksbury, 1998; Lapinski, Braz, & Maloney, 2010; Reidy, Sloan, & Zeichner, 2009; Pleck, 1981, 1995; Rudman, 1988; Simpson, 2015). The injunctive force of gender roles is suggested by social learning theory and its applications, in that the theory predicts that individuals will modify their behavior to conform to gender roles so as to avoid negative consequences associated with departing from norms (Bandura & Walters, 1963). Therefore, as a result of learning about or witnessing the negative consequences that may befall individuals who depart from normative expectations of gender (i.e., gender roles), individuals who perceive that they do not conform to gender roles may come to believe that they belong to a stigmatized population.

STIGMA

To more fully explicate what is suggested above, it may be helpful to explore exactly what the construct of "stigma" refers to, as the term has somewhat nebulous connotations in the associated literature (Major & O'Brien, 2005). Classically, stigma has

been defined by Goffman's (1963) seminal writing on the topic as an attribute that displays an "undesired differentness from what we had anticipated" (p. 5), that results in the person who is associated with the stigmatized attribute being, "reduced in our minds from a whole and usual person to a tainted, discounted one" (p .3). According to Goffman's writings, stigma comes in three varieties: (1) "abominations of the body" (e.g., physically disabilities), (2) "blemishes of individual character" (e.g., mental illness, addiction), and (3) "tribal stigma of race, religion, and nation" (e.g., wearing a burqua, physical attributes associated with a devalued race) (p. 4). Goffman notes that there is nothing inherently stigmatizing about any attribute. Rather it is the relationship between an expected stereotype of individuals and their conformity to or departure from that stereotype which creates stigma. Goffman (1963) also notes that stigmatizing attributes may be visible or invisible. In the case that a stigmatizing attribute is visible, individuals may find that others automatically discredit them. However, in the case that a stigmatizing attribute is invisible or concealable, individuals are *discreditable*, though not necessarily automatically discredited. That is to say that the possibility or threat of negative evaluation as a result of a stigmatizing attribute exists, though the occurrence of this is not guaranteed, as it may be in the case of visible stigmatizing attributes. This definition has provided the central departure point from which almost all other definitions of stigma tend to ground themselves.

In the past two decades a number of revised theories of stigma have been generated (c.f., Link & Phelan, 2001; Meyer, 2003; Pachankis, 2007; Quinn & Chaudoir, 2009; Smith, 2007). Most relevant to this study is Meisenbach's (2010) expansion of the

definition of stigma. Meisenbach (2010) argues that stigmas do not need to fall into the three categories outlined by Goffman (1963), nor do they need to be socially recognized, communicated, or materially devalued, as has been argued elsewhere (Link & Phelan, 2001). Rather, Meisenbach argues that insofar as individuals perceive (regardless of the veracity of that perception) that some part of their identity, visible or invisible, exposes them to the risk or reality of being devalued as a result of that attribute, then they experience stigma. To be more specific, Meisenbach's (2010) perspective broadens the definition of stigma to include the experiences of those who *perceive* the threat of discrimination based on their identity, rather than limiting stigma to those who experience material discrimination as a result of a certain attribute.

Indeed, the perception of being stigmatized has proven to be a stronger predictor of negative personal and relational outcomes than actual discrimination (Doyle & Molix, 2014a; Pinel, 2002). Meisenbach's (2010) focus on perception, rather than the realized experience, of being stigmatized is key to interrogating the experiences of individuals who perceive that they depart from gender roles and their experiences of social relationships. Perceptions are a powerful force in relationships. The evidence for this is ample: It is the perception of available support that is most impactful to individuals experiencing stress, not whether this support is received or not (Wethington & Kessler, 1986). It is the perceived resolvability of an argument that is most strongly related to relational outcomes than actual resolution (Bevan, Finan, & Kaminsky, 2008; Johnson & Roloff, 1998). It the perception that a given topic is threatening to a relationship that is associated with avoidance of that topic in relationships (Redlick, 2017). It is perceptions

that individuals hold regarding their partners (i.e., positive illusions) that seem to most influence relational satisfaction, rather than the reality of what partners are or are not (Murray & Holmes, 1997; Tomlinson, Aron, Carmichael, Reis, & Holmes, 2014).

Thus, drawing upon the important role of perception that is accorded in Meisenbach's (2010) theory of stigma, *perceived* gender role departure (PGRD) is taken up as the central variable of interest in this study. Perceived gender role departure is defined here as individuals' perception that their gender identity differs in some way from the gender roles that their society and important close others (i.e., romantic partners) hold them to. It is important to note that this definition does not imply a valenced endorsement of these gender roles. Gender roles can be known and may influence expectations about others without being supported or liked (Barth, Kim, Eno, & Guadagno, 2017). Beliefs about the nature of individuals of a certain gender may persist absent of whether people are favorably disposed towards those beliefs being confirmed or disproven. While individuals may not be fond of the phenomenon, and indeed may actively resist it, it may still be that those who perceive themselves as departing from norms, such as gender roles, will be aware of the negative social sanctions that they perceive may occur as a result.

Perceived gender role departure may not be a unidimensional construct. Rather, a careful review of the literature suggests that it is comprised of four separate, though interrelated, dimensions: source, magnitude, type, and direction. Source refers to whether individuals perceive their gender identity differs from the way that they feel distant others or a close others (i.e., romantic partners) perceive their gender identity. The dimension of

magnitude refers to the magnitude of departure of individuals' gender identity from gender roles. The type of gender role departure speaks to whether it is masculine or feminine gender roles that are being departed from. Finally, the direction of gender role departure delineates whether individuals perceive that they are exceeding or falling short of the level of masculinity and femininity stipulated by their perception of their society's collective norms about gender. To the knowledge of the author, this is a unique operationalization of gender role departure.

Considering the multiple layers of complexity that may affect the operation and influence of PGRD, the next portion of this writing will be devoted to investigating these dimensions at a greater level of detail. The dimensions of source, magnitude, type, and direction will each be discussed (in this order), as well as some of the possible interactions that may exist among those dimensions. This discussion will be used to generate a set of hypotheses and research questions that are devoted to uncovering the possibility of nuanced associations between PGRD and perceived stigma that may be revealed by investigating it at a more granular level.

DIMENSIONS OF PGRD AND THEIR ASSOCIATIONS WITH PERCEIVED STIGMA

PGRD Is in The Eye of The Beholder: The Dimension of Source

Of the extant research on gender role departure, much has relied on individuals' judgments of gender role departure regarding either confederates or fictional targets. In both cases, the individual who is departing from a gender role is a stranger. Belying the methodology employed by this body of research is an assumption of a perspective of generalized, or distant, others (Mead, 1934); that is, those who belong to an individuals'

society but are not known to individuals at an intimate level. Individuals' perceptions of both how close and distant others view them contribute to the ways that individuals understand themselves (Cooley, 1964). To apply the concept of the generalized other to notions of PGRD, individuals may develop their understanding of themselves as either gender role conforming or departing in part by drawing on their beliefs of how members of their society and how their more intimate counterparts see them (Doyle & Molix, 2014a). However, as elucidated in symbolic interactionism, the influence of meta-perceptions of generalized others and intimate others are separate concepts, and thus may have separate and distinguishable patterns of association with related phenomena.

The importance of identifying the source of PGRD (i.e., distant others or romantic partners) is furthered by the idea that judgments made about others may vary based on the nature or intimacy of the relationship between individuals and those evaluating them (Burgoon, 1978; Burgoon & Hale, 1988; Dillard, Solomon, & Samp, 1996). Research conducted on gender role departure as seen through the eyes of distant others has offered the fairly stable conclusion that gender role departure is associated with negative evaluative and material consequences (Gilbert & Rader, 2001; Lindsey & Zakahi, 2006; Reidy, Sloan, & Zeichner, 2009a; Rudman, 1998; W. Wood & Eagly, 2013). It has been argued that individuals who are aware of the possibility of social sanctions that come about as a result of departing from gender role norms come to perceive themselves as stigmatized as a result of the process of imagining the way that distant others might react to other individuals with a similar stigmatizing attribute (Lazare, 1987; Thoits, 1985; Watson, Corrigan, & Larson, 2007). Indeed, Quinn and Chaudoir (2009) found evidence

of increased psychological distress among those who identified with a group that they believed to be stigmatized by their society. Considering the consistency of the findings from this body of research drawn from the perspective of distant others, it seems reasonable to suggest the following:

H1: Individuals' perception that distant others view them as departing from gender roles is significantly and positively associated with perceived stigma.

While evidence surrounding the question of the association of perceived stigma and PGRD in the eyes of distant others is fairly unequivocal, a separate body of research from the perspective of a close other is much less settled. To be clear, when referencing close others in this writing, specific reference is being made to romantic partners. With this in mind, it has been suggested that androgyny, the concept of possessing both masculine and feminine attributes, can be perceived as positive (having desirable qualities of masculinity and femininity) or negative (having aversive qualities of masculinity and femininity) in close relationships (Woodhill & Samuels, 2004). Research on departing from gender roles in close relationships has been relatively silent on the topic of androgyny in its relationship to stigma, with the exception of a few pieces of research that indicate that men who enact some feminine behaviors in close relationships (i.e., expressiveness and maintenance) enjoy increased relationship quality in the eyes of their partners (Lamke, 1989, Lamke, Sollie, Durbin, & Fitzpatrick, 1994; Stafford, Dainton, & Haas, 2003). The question of whether women suffer in the eyes of close others when they depart from gender roles remains open. In response to this open

question, and to more fully understand the influence that the source of PGRD may have on perceived stigma the following two research questions are set forth:

RQ1: Are individuals' perceptions that close others view them as departing from gender roles significantly associated with perceived stigma?

RQ2: Are individuals' perceptions that close others or distant others view them as departing from gender roles more strongly related to perceived stigma?

Size Matters: The Dimension of Magnitude

As mentioned previously, it is possible that there are interactions among the dimensions of PGRD that will meaningfully influence its association with perceived stigma. Indeed, it is quite possible that the source of PGRD may interact with a second dimension: magnitude. To more fully understand this possible interaction, the relationship between the magnitude of PGRD and perceived stigma should be explicated in isolation first. As was the case with source, it is important to acknowledge that most of the extant research on magnitude of gender role departure evinces a meaningful methodological limitation (Reidy, Shirk, Sloan, & Zeichner, 2009b). Most studies on gender role departure rely on assessing judgments of individuals who are grossly departing from gender roles, involving extremely stereotyped representations of stigmatized populations, or investigate departure by way of a binary assessment (i.e., conforming to or departing from gender roles with no gradations of degree) (Reidy et al., 2009b; Reidy et al., 2009a). As a result of these methodological choices, there seems to be very little direct evidence to speak to the role that magnitude might play as a dimension of gender role departure. However, other sources of knowledge can obliquely

support an argument that more extreme departures from gender roles might invite concomitantly more extreme negative reactions, and thus be associated with higher levels of perceived stigma.

One reason for making this assertion is that very slight or small departures may go unnoticed or be dismissed by distant or close others. Indeed, as endorsements of gender role stereotypes have softened slightly over time (Haines, Deaux, & Lofaro, 2016), small departures from gender roles might be experienced by others without negative repercussions. Larger violations, however, may still invite the social sanctions that are associated with departing from a norm. In short, the magnitude of PGRD may be positively associated with perceived stigma and as such the following hypothesis is offered:

H2: The magnitude of PGRD will be significantly and positively associated with perceived stigma.

Now, the complexifying role that source may play by virtue of its interaction with magnitude must also be considered. As noted previously, the research generated on negative evaluations of those who depart from gender roles (Garnets & Pleck, 1979; Gilbert & Rader, 2001; Lapinski, Braz, & Maloney, 2010; Lindsey & Zakahi, 2006; Pleck, 1981, 1995; Rudman, 1998; Simpson, 2015; Wong, et al., 2016; W. Wood & Eagly, 2013), as well as the more recently cited research on the endorsement of gender role stereotypes (Haines, Deaux, & Lofaro, 2016) both rely on the judgments made about individuals from the eyes of distant others. When examining this body of literature, it

seems logical to suggest that the magnitude of PGRD in the eyes of distant others plays a significant intensifying role in its relationship with perceived stigma.

Making a similar statement about the role of the magnitude of PGRD in the eyes of close others is possible, but requires drawing from more indirectly related findings. Sillars and Scott (1983), and more recently Kenny and Acitelli (2001) as well as Reis (2007) have argued that perceptions of how partners feel about each other may represent one of the central aspects of relationships, specifically those relationships that are relatively more intimate, such as those with romantic partners. While individuals' perceptions of their partners (and by extension their perception of how they are seen by their partners) may not be completely accurate, these perceptions tend to become increasingly aligned over time (Sillars & Scott, 1983). While individuals typically desire to be viewed positively by their partners (Tomlinson, Aron, Carmichael, Reis, & Holmes, 2014) they also desire to be viewed accurately by their partners (Reis, Clark, & Holmes, 2004). Said another way, individuals wish to be viewed by their partners in the same way that they view themselves (Swann, 1983). As departures from alignment on views of the self grow in magnitude, individuals both experience and create physical and psychological distance from their partners (Tomlinson et al., 2014). Research has suggested that when individuals perceive that their partner does not view them in the same way that they view themselves, they experience fear that their true self will be discovered and potentially rejected (Murray, Rose, Bellavia, Holmes, & Kusche, 2002). This fear of discovery and subsequent social devaluation in a close relationship is qualitatively similar to the phenomenon of perceived stigma. Considering this, a

hypothesis regarding the moderating role that magnitude may play in the relationship between source of PGRD and perceived stigma is offered:

H3a: The magnitude of PGRD will moderate the association between individuals' perceptions that a close other sees them as departing from gender roles and perceived stigma such that increases in the magnitude of PGRD will be associated with greater perceived stigma.

H3b: The magnitude of PGRD will moderate the association between individuals' perceptions that distant others see them as departing from gender roles and perceived stigma such that increases in the magnitude of PGRD will be associated with greater perceived stigma.

The Dimensions of Type and Direction

The third and fourth dimensions of PGRD, type and direction, are most productively discussed as they interact with the first and second dimensions of source and magnitude. As mentioned earlier, the type of PGRD refers to which of the two binary gender roles, masculine or feminine, that individuals may perceive that they are departing from, while direction references exceeding or falling short of the level of masculinity or femininity that is called for by a gender role. If PGRD occurs, it necessarily involves one of two gender roles (type) and a departure from that gender role involving either more or less conformity to the role (direction). The role of source is also implicated here, as PGRD can be experienced as occurring either publicly or privately, in the eyes of close or distant others. Indeed, researchers have suggested that issues related to gender identity

and expression might be part of shifting boundaries between public and private attributes (Bute, 2009; Harter, Kirby, Edwards, & McClanahan, 2005; Levitt & Ippolito, 2014).

In considering the interaction of type, direction, and source, it has been suggested that individuals of any gender will at some point perceive that they either fall short of or exceed the expectations of a given gender role in either or both the eyes of close or distant others (Pleck, 1981, 1995). In any of the possible combinations of these dimensions (individuals perceive that they exceed or fall short of expectations for masculinity or femininity in the eyes of a close or distant others), the final dimension of magnitude may also be at play. As noted above, individuals may feel an increased threat of social sanction exists as a result of departing from the expectations of a gender role to a greater degree. While variation in the reasons *why* individuals might feel that social sanction accompanies PGRD is acknowledged, it is argued here that the end result of feeling stigmatized by this departure will remain constant regardless of the type or direction of PGRD. The logic implied by this statement is grounded in the notion that when individuals' perceptions of their own gender are not matched by what they perceive close and/or distant others to perceive their gender as, they will come to feel that their identity involves a hidden, or concealable attribute. The existence of this concealable attribute is not contingent upon the type or direction of departure. Rather it is that the departure is of a magnitude large enough that this "undesired differentness from what [is] anticipated" (Goffman, 1963, p. 5) is noticed by a close or distant others that creates the perception of stigmatization.

The phenomenon of harboring a concealable attribute that may lead to rejection if known has been spoken about previously in the literature on concealable stigma (Pachankis, 2007; Quinn & Chaudoir, 2009). The two perspectives referenced here diverge somewhat in their explanation of what leads individuals who perceive that they have a concealable stigma to experience personal and relational distress. However, they are united in their assertion that when individuals perceive themselves as having a concealable stigmatizing attribute, their distress is attributable in part to the feeling that the concealable self might be discovered by others, and that this discovery would have potentially negative consequences, such as being "reduced in [the] minds [of others] from a whole and usual person to a tainted, discounted one" (Goffman, 1963, p. 3). In the context of PGRD as a potentially stigmatizing attribute, individuals' perception of having a secret self may occur regardless of the type and/or direction of the PGRD, but rather rest more fully on the dimensions of source and magnitude. While the evidence reviewed above allows for some conjectures to be made about the interplay of the dimensions of PGRD, these interactions have not yet been tested in empirical research. As such, the following research questions are offered:

RQ3: Will the interaction of type, source, and magnitude of PGRD contribute to a significant increase in explained variance of perceived stigma, over and above that explained by the interaction of source and magnitude?

RQ4: Will the interaction of direction, source, and magnitude of PGRD contribute to a significant increase in explained variance of perceived stigma, over and above that explained by the interaction of source and magnitude?

RQ5: Will the interaction of type, direction, source, and magnitude of PGRD contribute to a significant increase in explained variance of perceived stigma, over and above that explained by the interaction of source and magnitude?

Stigma and Perceptions of Romantic Relationships

The goal of the previous portion of this writing has been to set out the ways in which the various aspects of PGRD might act in isolation or in combination to influence perceived stigma. Relatedly, the task of this next portion of the dissertation will be to consider how perceived stigma might be related to individuals' perceptions of their romantic relationships. It is particularly important to study perceived stigma in romantic relationships as this type of relationship has been identified as among the most consequential that adults form and sustain (Hazan & Zeifman, 1994; Reis, Clark, & Holmes, 2004). Disconcertingly, though, individuals who identify as being part of a stigmatized group consistently perceive that their relationships are of lower quality (Doyle & Molix, 2014b). If researchers are to generate knowledge that might be used to remediate this troubling pattern of results, they must identify exactly which perceptions of romantic relationships are being impacted by perceived stigma so that interventions can be targeted towards those specific perceptions. To this end, the connections between perceived stigma and perceptions of commitment, investment, satisfaction, intimacy, and relational uncertainty in romantic relationships will each be explored, and hypotheses regarding the specific nature of these associations will be offered in the next portion of this writing.

Stigma and Romantic Relationships

Theoretical perspectives and empirical evidence have both suggested that perceived stigma may meaningfully influence communication and close relationships (Major & O'Brien, 2005; Greene, 2009; Pinel, 1999, 2002; Slade, O'Neill, Simpson, & Lashen, 2007). When individuals perceive that they are stigmatized, they may try to avoid the potentially negative consequences of that stigma being discovered by avoiding situations that might make the attribute more salient. They may also choose to affiliate only with similarly stigmatized others, or with those who they perceive see them authentically rather than through the distorted lens of a stigmatized stereotype (Kaiser, Vick, & Major, 2006; Miller & Kaiser, 2001). Thus individuals who perceive that they are stigmatized may find that their perceived options for forming social relationships are somewhat limited.

The effects of perceived stigma reach beyond just the initiation of social relationships, though, and can be seen in established, intimate relationships as well. For example, LeBlanc, Frost, and Wright (2015) suggested that the stress associated with the perceived stigma of identifying as a sexual minority might affect personal relationships through a process of stress proliferation, wherein stressful experiences in one domain (stemming from sexual minority status) precipitate stress in other couple-level domains. This, in turn, is associated with declines in relationship functioning (Doyle & Molix, 2015; Lewis, Milletich, Derlega, & Padilla, 2014; Lehmiller & Agnew, 2007; Otis, Rostosky, Riggle, & Hamrin, 2006; Rostosky, Riggle, Gray & Hatton, 2007; Totenhagen, Randall, Cooper, Tao & Walsh, 2017). Further, Frost and Fingerhut (2016) found that

when same-sex couples were surrounded by a hostile distal social context (i.e., being exposed to negative messages from the media regarding same-sex marriage) they tended to report lower relationship quality. The detrimental effects of stress associated with perceived sexual orientation stigma, though, are moderated by individuals' perceptions of their partner's support strategies. Recent research suggests that the negative psychological outcomes of perceived sexual orientation stigma are minimized when partners are able to provide high amounts of emotion-focused support (Randall, Tao, Totenhagen, Walsh & Cooper, 2017). The results of this study might be taken as a hint that the operation of stigma in romantic relationships is nuanced and worthy of additional investigations.

There is also rich literature that has considered how perceived stigma, particularly health-related stigma, impacts individuals' interpersonal communication. Much of this research has been focused on the phenomenon of disclosure of a perceived stigmatizing attribute to a close other. For instance, Rains (2014) found that greater levels of perceived stigma were associated with decrements in disclosure about a stigmatizing attribute in online contexts. Additionally, Chang and Bazarova (2016) observed that disclosure of a stigmatizing attribute in online contexts was typically met with negatively valenced responses, even when the disclosure was made to similarly stigmatized others. Similarly, Garcia and Crocker (2008) noted that when individuals were concerned that disclosing a stigmatizing attribute (i.e., mental illness) would negatively affect their standing in the eyes of others or might harm their own self-image, these individuals tended to disclose less, and also to experience decreased psychological well-being when they did disclose.

Finally, in studying how individuals disclose stigmatizing information, a study by Venetis, Chernicky-Karcher, and Gettings (2017) revealed an inverse association between perceived stigma of the information being disclosed and the directness of the disclosure. As noted above, research that considers the intersection of disclosure and stigma seems to be thriving and fruitful. However, beyond the realm of disclosure, there is also some evidence to suggest that individuals' perception that they possess a stigmatizing attribute (concealable or otherwise) may affect other dimensions of close relationships as well. These other dimensions are detailed here.

Investment Model Variables: Commitment, Investment, Satisfaction, and Perceived Quality of Alternatives

As noted by Lehmiller and Agnew (2006), research that has considered the role of stigmatization as it influences constructs specified by the investment model (Rusbult, 1980, 1983) has been somewhat underdeveloped. These important constructs include commitment, investment, satisfaction, and perceived quality of alternatives. The construct of commitment captures the degree to which individuals desire their current relationship to continue indefinitely into the future (Rusbult, Martz, & Agnew, 1998). Investment references both the tangible (e.g., money, shared property) and intangible (e.g., emotion, time) resources that have been allocated to a relationship that would be lost were the relationship to be terminated (Rusbult, 1980, 1983). Satisfaction represents the degree to which individuals feel that their needs are being met by the current relationship (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). Finally, perceived quality of alternatives involves

the degree to which individuals see people other than their current partner as possible desirable replacements (Rusbult, 1983).

In the years since Lehmiller and Agnew's (2006) writing, some researchers have begun to fill the gap in the literature regarding how perceived stigma might affect investment model variables. However, much of this research has been conducted from the perspective of individuals who perceive their stigmatized status as stemming from identifying as a racial or sexual minority (reviewed below), with much less research conducted from the perspective of those who feel stigmatized on the basis of their gender identity. The evidence gleaned from this body of knowledge paints a somewhat inconsistent picture of how perceived stigma might affect investment model variables. For example, perceived stigma has been associated with decrements in commitment (Mohr & Daly; 2008; Rosenthal & Starks, 2015; Thies, Starks, Denmark & Rosenthal, 2016), but has also been found in other studies to be associated with increased commitment (Lehmiller & Agnew, 2006). While Rostosky, Riggle, Rothblum, and Balsam (2016) argue that perceived stigma may lead individuals to stray away from fully or publicly committing to their relationships, this assertion has yet to be confirmed or disproven by research. The findings regarding investment are also mixed in their pattern of results, with some studies finding that individuals who feel stigmatized tend to invest more in their relationships (Lehmiller & Agnew, 2006) but other studies finding no significant relationship between the two constructs (Rosenthal & Starks, 2015; Thies et al., 2016). In a similar manner, studies have found either no direct relationship between perceived stigma and satisfaction (Kamen, Burns, & Beach, 2011; Lehmiller & Agnew,

2006) or a negative relationship between perceived stigma and satisfaction (Mohit & Daly, 2015; Rosenthal & Starks, 2015; Thies et al., 2016). This pattern holds for the perceived quality of alternatives as well, with studies finding both a significant negative relationship between perceived quality of alternatives and marginalization (Lehmiller & Agnew, 2006) or no relationship between marginalization and perceived quality of alternatives (Lehmiller, 2010). Thus the question of how perceived stigma, particularly perceived stigma that is connected to gender identity, may influence investment model variables remains open to investigation. Reflecting this, three research questions are offered:

RQ6: Will perceived stigma be significantly associated with commitment?

RQ7: Will perceived stigma be significantly associated with investment?

RQ8: Will perceived stigma be significantly associated with satisfaction?

RQ9: Will perceived stigma be significantly associated with perceived quality of alternatives?

Intimacy

Another important dimension of relationships that may be influenced by perceived stigma is that of intimacy. This construct reflects the degree to which individuals feel close, connected, and bonded to their partners (Sternberg, 1986). Recent studies have suggested that perceiving stigma on the basis of a sexual or racial identity is associated with declines in reported intimacy in romantic relationships (Doyle & Molix, 2015; Thies et al., 2016), as well as increased fear of intimacy (Szymanski & Hilton, 2013). This negative association between perceived stigma and intimacy is perhaps

explained by the notion of the "secret self" (Murray et al., 2002) referenced earlier. If individuals fear that their true self might be subject to rejection or social devaluation, as is the case for individuals who perceive that they are stigmatized, they may avoid forming relationships with others in which they are deeply and intimately known so as to avoid these possible undesired outcomes. Indeed, perspectives on disclosure have suggested that when individuals are unsure of whether their partner will continue to hold them in positive regard in the face of new personal information, they tend to avoid communicating about that aspect of themselves, and draw away from their partner, rather than drawing closer to him or her (Doyle & Molix, 2014b; Murray, Bellavia, Rose, & Griffin, 2003; Murray, Holmes, & Collins, 2006; Redlick, 2017). In concordance with this logic and the associated research findings, the following hypothesis is presented:

H4: Perceived stigma will be significantly negatively associated with intimacy.

Relational uncertainty

A final aspect to be discussed in association with perceived stigma is relational uncertainty. Relational uncertainty is the "degree of confidence individuals have in their perceptions of involvement within interpersonal relationships" (Knobloch, Miller, Bond, & Mannone, 2007, p. 156). There are three sub-types of relational uncertainty (Knobloch & Solomon, 1999). The first sub-type of relational uncertainty is self uncertainty, which references individuals' perceptions of the degree of ambiguity that they feel towards their own involvement. The second sub-type of relational uncertainty references certainty towards perceptions of individuals' partners' level of involvement in the relationship and

accordingly is called partner uncertainty. Finally, relationship uncertainty reflects ambiguity surrounding the nature and status of the relationship itself (Graham, 2011).

Perceptions of uncertainty, across all three subtypes, may be intensified by the state of chronic attributional uncertainty that individuals who perceive themselves as stigmatized may experience (Major & Crocker, 1983). This attributional uncertainty stems from the ambiguity which individuals who perceive that they are stigmatized face when trying to interpret the behaviors of others toward them. Ambiguity is engendered by questions in the mind of those who perceive that they are stigmatized of whether the behavior of others is being enacted in response to stereotypes associated with a stigmatizing attribute or whether behavior is being enacted in response to a more localized and personalized view of individuals. This ambiguity is associated with changes in affect and evaluations of both the self and of others (Major & Crocker, 1983). As such, it is possible that the attributional ambiguity associated with perceived stigma may contribute to increased uncertainty about individuals' own feelings about their relationship, the nature of their partners' feelings about the relationship, and their feelings about the relationship as a whole. Research has supported this notion insofar as when individuals experience increases in potentially stigmatizing health related phenomena, they may find themselves increasingly questioning how their relationship might be affected by this challenge (Brashers, 2001; Checton et al., 2012; Greene, Derlega, & Matthews, 2006). Additionally, Dion and Dion (2001) suggest that conforming to typical gender roles may play an important part in setting up gendered expectations for how partners should act in the process of creating and sustaining a close relationship. Many of

the thoughts and behaviors that are expected of both the self and the partner, as well as the relationship, are all spelled out by typical gender roles. Ascribing closely to these dictates allows individuals to lessen the potentially aversive experience of wondering about their own or their partners' behaviors, feelings, or the state of their relationship, as this knowledge can be gleaned by deriving inferences from the content of typical gender roles. Considering that the perception of compliance with gender roles might lessen each of the subtypes of uncertainty, the following hypotheses are offered:

H5a: Perceived stigma will be significantly and positively associated with self uncertainty.

H5b: Perceived stigma will be significantly and positively associated with partner uncertainty.

H5c: Perceived stigma will be significantly and positively associated with relationship uncertainty.

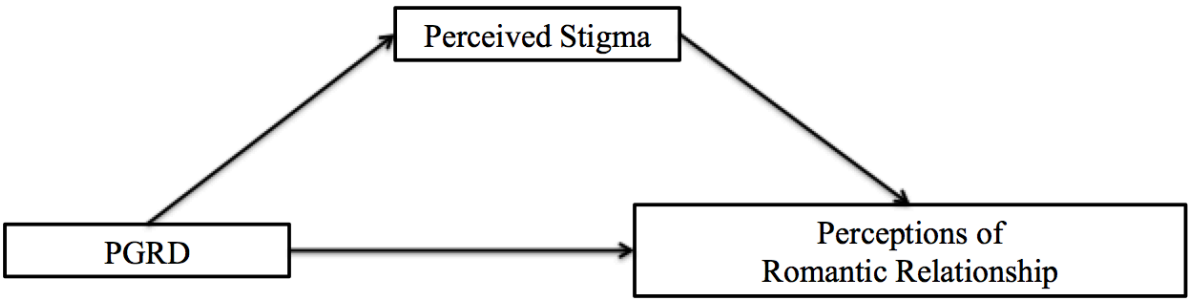
CONNECTING THE DOTS: A MEDIATIONAL MODEL OF PGRD, STIGMA, AND PERCEPTIONS OF RELATIONSHIPS

The previous three sections of this writing have attempted to accomplish three tasks. The first was to place the literatures on gender roles and stigma in conversation with each other, culminating in a presentation of a conceptualization of PGRD. The second task was to detail how specific dimensions of PGRD might be related to individuals' perceptions of being stigmatized on the basis of their gender identity. The third task was to then suggest how those perceptions of being stigmatized, resulting from PGRD, might also be connected to individuals' perceptions of their romantic

relationships. The task of this fourth section then is to formally articulate the meditational model that is implied by the preceding literature review, research questions, and hypotheses. The central assertion of this fourth section is as follows (and is visually represented in Figure 1):

H6a-h: Perceived stigma mediates the association between PGRD and (a) commitment, (b) investment, (c) satisfaction, (d) perceived quality of alternatives, (e) intimacy, (f) self uncertainty, (g) partner uncertainty, and (h) relationship uncertainty.

Figure 1. Perceived stigma as a mediating mechanism in the relationship between PGRD and perceptions of romantic relationships.



The implications of locating stigma as a mediating mechanism between PGRD and individuals' perceptions of their romantic relationships are meaningful. If, as will be argued in this project, departing from gender roles is positively associated with perceived stigma, and perceived stigma is detrimental to perceptions of romantic relationships, then it might be suggested that departing from gender roles is harmful to relationships, and thus individuals should seek to conform to gender roles. This approach, however, is not

productive, effective, or inclusive. The fruitlessness of such suggestions is almost immediately apparent when one considers the findings that extreme conformity to gender roles may in fact be detrimental to relationships, rather than helpful (O'Neil, 1990; Wong et al., 2016). Additionally, potential inferences derived from such suggestions might promote discourses that point to the "goodness" or "rightness" of conforming to gender roles, and the logical converse of how departing from gender roles may be harmful or wrong. These discourses may serve to reinforce the power of essentialist and binary systems of gender and associated gender oppression.

What other options might exist for researchers when interpreting stigma as a mediating mechanism? One possibility is that researchers may see the operation of stigma as a mediator as providing a strategic opportunity to disrupt the possibly deleterious relationship between PGRD and perceptions of relational quality. This might be done by considering the ways in which individuals are already disrupting the link between departing from norms and feeling stigmatized. For example, Unger (1992) has called the experience of affirmatively identifying with and evaluating a stigmatized identity that applies to the self "positive marginality" and found the phenomenon to be operating to positive effect in a small sample of religiously stigmatized women. Additionally, Levitt and Ipollito (2013) found that some transgender/transsexual individuals, who often perceive stigmatization on the basis of their gender and sexual identities, reported that they were glad to have developed a more complex understanding of their gender as a result of being a member of the trans community. Separately, Romo (2012) has developed the notion of "positive deviance" – departing from a norm not in a way that is

less healthy, but in one that is healthier. While this departure is still a stigmatizing experience, it can be one that contributes to both physical and mental well-being, rather than suffering.

Meyer's (2003) minority stress framework supports these findings in that it explicitly notes that there are positive outcomes that can accompany the experience of being part of a stigmatized minority group, such as feelings of group cohesiveness and solidarity. Shih (2004) also offers a perspective on stigma that can be coupled with Meyer's, which focuses on resilience and empowerment in responding to stigma. Shih (2004) finds that when individuals take their stigmatized identity as an opportunity for empowerment, rather than something that must be coped with, positive outcomes can be attained. These individuals find that successfully negotiating the difficulties associated with their stigmatized status is an experience that builds them up, rather than tears them down. Drawing from these theoretical and empirical standpoints, this study attempts to locate perceived stigma as a mediator, so as to allow for its conceptualization as a useful intervention point for disrupting the potentially dysfunctional link between gender and perceptions of romantic relationships.

Methods

PARTICIPANTS

Participants for this study were recruited from Amazon.com's Mechanical Turk, a website that allows individuals to participate in research studies in exchange for a small monetary reward (in this study, $0.75). Samples from Mechanical Turk have been shown to be equally as reliable, yet more diverse than traditional undergraduate samples (Buhrmester, Kwang, & Gosling, 2011; Goodman, Cryder, & Cheema, 2013). Participants on Mechanical Turk are referred to as "workers." Mechanical Turk uses an algorithm to identify workers who consistently complete research studies to the satisfaction of individuals posting them. Only workers who had completed at least 90% of studies to the satisfaction of individuals who posted them were able to participate in this study.

Participants in this study were all United States residents (N = 401), with 32.9 % of participants residing in the South, 23.7 % in the Northeast, 21.9 % in the Midwest, 11.7 % in the Southwest, and 9.7% in the Northwest. All participants were currently involved in a romantic relationship. Participants were, on average, 29.32 years old (SD = 6.97) and had been in a relationship for an average of 4.61 years (SD = 5.28). The sample reported being 39.4 % male, and 60.6 % female. Statistics for current gender identity closely approximated the statistics for sex assigned at birth, with 39.9 % of participants indicating their current gender identity as male, and 58.4 % reporting their current gender identity as female. Five participants reported their gender identity as gender queer and two participants reported their gender identity as other. The majority (87.0 %) of

participants reported their sexual orientation as heterosexual, 10.7 % reported their orientation as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or queer, and 2.2 % reported their sexuality as other. Additionally, the majority of participants (93.5 %) reported that their current romantic partner was of a different sex, while 6.5 % indicated that their partner was of the same sex. Statistics for whether individuals' partners were of the same or different gender were identical to those produced for whether partners were the same or different sex. Many participants reported their ethnicity as Caucasian/White (71.8 %), while 9.5% reported their ethnicity as African-American/Black, 8.0 % as Asian/Pacific Islander, 5.7 % as Hispanic/Latinx, and the remaining participants (5.0 %) reported their ethnicity as Southeast Asian/Indian, or another ethnicity not listed. Many participants had graduated from a four-year college (37.9 %), with an additional 27.4 % completing at least some college. An additional 13.7 % had started or completed their graduate education. The remaining 9.5 % had graduated from high school or received their GED, and one participant indicated that they had begun but not completed their high school education.

PROCEDURE

The survey for this study was hosted on Qualtrics.com, an online data collection website. After providing consent, participants were given access to the survey. Participants were then presented with a number of scales relevant to the study (counter-balanced) including scales to assess individuals' PGRD, as well as their perceptions of the levels of commitment, investment, satisfaction, quality of alternatives, intimacy, and uncertainty that were present in their relationship. After completing these scales, respondents were asked to answer a set of demographic questions designed to assess their

age, ethnicity, current sexual identity, length of their current romantic relationship, education, geographic location, biological sex, as well as the current gender identity and biological sex of their partner. Finally, upon submitting this information, participants were directed to a page thanking them for their participation in the study and providing instructions on how to receive payment.

MEASURES

Perceived Gender Role Departure

Each of the sub-dimensions of PGRD was measured using data from an adapted form of the scale developed by Magliozzi, Saperstein, and Westbrook (2016). The original scale asks participants to indicate how masculine and feminine they perceive they are, and also how masculine and feminine they think others perceive them to be. The adaptation in this study asked participants to rate how masculine and feminine they believe their romantic partner sees them as (1 = *not at all*, 7 = *very*). Please see Appendix A for further details on this scale. While Magliozzi et al., (2016) have used this measure recently, there are no additional published reliability and validity data available at the time of this writing. Additional details on how data from the scale was used to explore the sub-dimensions of PGRD are provided below.

Source

Individuals' perceptions that (a) close and (b) distant others see them as departing from their gender role were both calculated similarly. To calculate individuals' perceptions that a close other sees them as departing from their gender role, individuals' responses to questions of how masculine and feminine they see themselves were

subtracted from one another. Next, individuals' responses to items asking how masculine and feminine they perceive their romantic partner sees them were also subtracted from one another. An absolute value of the difference between these two differences was then taken. This value was referred to as "PGRD-close," and scores ranged from (0 = *very little departure in the eyes of a close other*) to (12 = *a great deal of departure in the eyes of a close other*)(*M* = 1.22, *SD* = 1.94; *range:* 0 -12). To calculate individuals' perceptions that distant others see them as departing from their gender role, individuals' responses to questions of how masculine and feminine they see themselves as were subtracted from one another. Following this, individuals' responses to items regarding how masculine and feminine they perceive distant others to see them as were also subtracted from one another. An absolute value of the difference between these two differences was then calculated. This value was referred to as "PGRD-distant" (*M* = 1.10, *SD* = 1.48; *range* = 0 - 12). Please see Appendix B for further details.

Magnitude

The magnitude of PGRD was calculated in four steps. First, an average was computed between participants' responses to questions of how masculine they think close and distant others see them. This average was then subtracted from how masculine participants see themselves as. Then, an average was computed between participants' responses to questions of how feminine they think close and distant others see them. This second average was subtracted from how masculine participants see themselves as. The final resulting difference from the femininity items was then subtracted from the difference calculated among the masculinity items. This final difference reflected the

magnitude of PGRD (*M* = 1.04, *SD* = 1.42, *range* = 0 -12). This scale has a range of (0 = *departing less*) to (12 = *departing more*). Lower scores on the PGRD-magnitude scale reflect perceptions in participants that they see themselves and are seen by close and distant others as more dichotomously; masculine *or* feminine and thus aligning more typical gender roles. Please see Appendix C for further details.

Type

To assess the type of PGRD, two determinations were made: (1) do individuals perceive themselves as being more/less masculine than others or their romantic partners perceive them to be and, (2) do individuals perceive themselves as being more/less feminine than others or their romantic partners perceive them to be. In the first case, individuals' responses to items asking how masculine they perceive themselves to be was subtracted from the average of individuals' responses to items asking how masculine they perceive others and their romantic partners perceive them to be (*M* = -.14, *SD* = .99). The absolute value of the mean and standard deviation of the resulting value was calculated. If the absolute value of the resulting difference for a given participant exceeded a standard deviation above the sample mean, then they were coded as '1', indicating that the masculine type of PGRD was present. If the absolute value of the resulting difference for a given participant did not exceed a standard deviation above the sample mean, then they were coded as '0' indicating the absence of the masculine type of PGRD. Identical calculations and coding procedures were employed for the feminine type of PGRD (*M* = .14, *SD* = .98). These codes (one for the masculine type of PGRD and one for feminine)

were used to create a final variable ('type') composed of four dummy codes: '0', indicating that neither the feminine nor masculine type of PGRD was present for a given individual (n = 314), '1' indicating that only the masculine type of PGRD was present for a given individual (n = 39), '2' indicating that only the feminine type of PGRD was present for a given individual and (n = 25), '3' indicating that both the feminine and masculine types of PGRD were present for a given individual (n = 23). Please see Appendix D for further details.

Direction

The direction of PGRD was assessed in three steps. First, individuals' ratings of how feminine and masculine they see themselves were summed. Second, the average of the sum of how feminine and masculine individuals' perceive a romantic partner to see them as and how feminine and masculine they perceive distant others to see them as was calculated. Thirdly, the average from the second step was subtracted from the sum that was calculated in the first. A mean and a standard deviation for the resulting value were then calculated across the sample (M = -.002, SD = .93). Individuals with scores that fell a standard deviation below the sample mean were coded as '1', representing individuals who felt that they perceived themselves to be significantly less feminine or masculine than others or their romantic partners perceived them to be (n = 67). Individuals with scores that fell a standard deviation above the sample mean were coded as '2', representing individuals who felt that they perceived themselves to be significantly more feminine or masculine than others or their romantic partners perceived them as (n = 69). Individuals with scores that did not fall above or below a standard deviation of the

sample mean were coded as ‘0’, representing neither a positive nor negative direction of PGRD (n = 265). Please see Appendix E for further details.

Perceived Stigma

At the time of this writing, a single dominant scale for measuring stigma has yet to emerge. Even among the many common measures of perceived stigma, a measure of perceived stigma as it might specifically apply to individuals who perceive that they depart from gender roles has not yet been developed. Considering this particular limitation in the measurement of perceived stigma, two adapted scales intended to measure the construct were presented to participants in this study.

The Stigma Consciousness Questionnaire (SCQ)

An adapted version of Pinel’s (1999) Stigma Consciousness Questionnaire (SCQ) was used in this study to assess participants’ perceptions that they were or might be stigmatized on the basis of their gender role departure. Participants were presented with a brief statement before viewing the scale, with the purpose of explaining the term ‘gender role departure’. The statement read: “In responding to the questions below, the phrase “departs from gender roles” refers to being perceived by others as acting in ways that may not match typical ideas about what it means to be masculine or feminine.” The SCQ has been successfully adapted for use with multiple potentially stigmatized identities including perceived stigma on the basis of gender, racial identity, and sexual orientation (Lewis, Derlega, Griffin, & Krowinski, 2003; Pinel, 1999, 2002; Schmalz & Kerstetter, 2006) and in multiple contexts including at work, online, in dyadic and group relationships, and in sport (Chang & Bazarova, 2016; Mosley & Rosenberg, 2007; Pinel,

1999, 2002; Pinel & Paulin, 2005). Example items from the scale included "Stereotypes about people who depart from gender roles have not affected me personally" and "Most people who conform to gender roles have a problem viewing those who depart from gender roles as equals." The scale includes 10 Likert –type items with seven points (1= *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*) (α = .65, M = 3.56, SD = .88). Please see Appendix F for the original and modified scales.

The Everyday Discrimination Scale (EDS)

The EDS (Forman, Williams, & Jackson, 1997; Williams, Yu, Jackson, & Anderson, 1997) is a well-established measure of perceived stigma (Seng, Lopez, Sperlich, Hamama, & Meldrum, 2014). The EDS has been used in research concerning perceived stigma from the perspective of sexual minorities, racial minorities, economically disadvantaged individuals, obese individuals, and individuals who inhabit more than one of these potentially stigmatized identities (Clark, Coleman, & Novak, 2004; Grollman, 2014; Kessler, Mickelson, & Williams, 1999; Mays & Cochran, 2001; Ryff, Keyes, & Hughes, 2003; Seng, et al., 2014). Use of the EDS has revealed that the experience of perceived stigma is a common one (Kessler, Mickelson, & Williams, 1999; Mays & Cochran, 2001). Perceived stigma, as measured by the EDS, is negatively associated with a host of negative psychological outcomes and lower overall quality of life (Kessler, Mickelson, & Williams, 1999; Mays & Cochran, 2001; Ryff, Keyes, & Hughes, 2003).

The EDS is composed of nine Likert-type items with seven points (1= *never*, 7 = *always*). These items assess individuals' perceptions of interpersonally mediated stigma

and discrimination. Before completing the scale, participants were presented with a statement that was identical to that which was presented to them at the start of the SCQ. The statement read: "In responding to the questions below, the phrase "departs from gender roles" refers to being perceived by others as acting in ways that may not match typical ideas about what it means to be masculine or feminine." Following this, participants were asked: "How often, on a day-to-day basis, do you experience each of the following things as a result of the way that you do or do not depart from gender roles?" Example items from the scale included "You are treated with less courtesy than other people," and "People act is if they think you are not as good as they are." Previous factor- and item-analysis of the scale suggested that the scale was unidimensional (Clark, Coleman, & Novak, 2004) ($\alpha = .95$, $M = 1.95$, $SD = 1.06$). Please see Appendix G for the full scale.

Commitment, Investment, Satisfaction, and Perceived Quality of Alternatives

The Investment Model Scale (Rusbult, Martz, & Agnew, 1998) was used to assess how committed, invested, and satisfied individuals perceive themselves to be in regards to their current romantic relationships, as well as to assess individuals' perceived quality of alternatives. Example items from the scale included: "I am committed to maintaining my relationship with my partner," "I want our relationship to last forever," (commitment; $\alpha = .88$, $M = 5.78$, $SD = 1.21$) "My partner and I share many memories," "I have put a great deal into our relationship that I would lose if the relationship were to end," (investment; $\alpha = .91$, M = 5.68, SD = 1.07) "my relationship is much better than others' relationships," "our relationship makes me very happy," (satisfaction; $\alpha = .96$, $M = 5.57$,

SD = 1.31) and "the people other than my partner whom I might become involved with are very appealing to me" (alternatives; α = .95, *M* = 3.45, *SD* = 1.64). The scale includes 37 Likert-type items, adapted to have seven points (1= *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*), with higher scores indicating greater commitment, investment, and satisfaction.

Intimacy

Aligning with the operationalization of intimacy in other published research (e.g., Knobloch & Carpenter-Theune, 2004; Knobloch & Solomon, 2002; Solomon & Theiss, 2008), Rubin's (1970) Love Scale was used to assess intimacy in this study. The scale reflects three proposed sub-dimensions of intimacy: (1) affiliative and dependent need, (2) a predisposition to help and, (3) an orientation of exclusiveness and absorption (Rubin, 1970, p. 265). The scale included 13 Likert-type items, adapted to have seven points (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*), with higher scores indicating greater feelings of intimacy with a romantic partner (α = .91, *M* = 5.34, *SD* = 1.06). Example items included "It would be hard for me to get along without my partner," "If I were lonely, my first thought would be to seek out my partner," and "I would do almost anything for my partner."

Uncertainty

The Relational Uncertainty Measure (RUM; Knobloch & Solomon, 1999) was used to assess the three dimensions of relational uncertainty. The scale asked participants to consider their level of certainty regarding their own feelings of involvement in their current relationship, as well as their partner's. The measure also asked respondents to consider how certain they are about the nature of particular aspects of the relationship

using a Likert-type scale on seven points (1 = *completely or almost completely uncertain*, 7 = *completely or almost completely certain*). Participants were asked to rate how certain or uncertain they feel about their current relationship, how certain or uncertain they are of their partner's feelings about the relationship, and their degree of certainty about the relationship itself. All items were introduced with instructions to indicate how certain or uncertain they were about certain aspects of their relationship. Example items included rating feelings of certainty about, "how much you like your partner," (self; α = .99, *M* = 2.05, *SD* = 1.45) "whether or not your partner wants this relationship to last," (partner; α = .99, *M* = 2.09, *SD* = 1.40) and "whether or not your partner likes you as much as you like him or her" (relationship; α = .98, *M* = 2.13, *SD* = 1.33). All responses were reverse-scored so that higher scores indicate greater uncertainty.

Social Desirability

As this study assessed a potentially stigmatizing identity attribute, a measure of social desirability was also collected for analysis and possible inclusion as a control variable. The Balanced Inventory of Desirable Responding Short Form (BIDR-16; Hart, Ritchie, Hepper, & Gebauer) will be used in this study and includes two sub-scales: impression management and self-deceptive enhancement. The first subscale assessed participants' tendency to alter representations of themselves to others so as to match their perceived societal expectations for behavior (examples: "I don't gossip," "I sometimes tell lies" (reverse coded))(α = .74, *M* = 3.20, *SD* = 2.24). The second subscale assessed participants' tendency to answer questions truthfully, but with a bias towards favorable responses (examples: "I never regret my decisions," "I am not always honest" (reverse

coded))(α = .78, *M* = 2.49, *SD* = 2.24). The scale has demonstrated good internal consistency, and items on the scale are all drawn from the extensively validated BIDR-40 (Hart, et al., 2015; Paulhus, 1991, 1998). Each subscale has eight items asking participants to rate the degree to which each statement accurately describes them (1 = *very much unlike me*, 7 = *very much like me*). Higher scores on the scales indicate a higher degree of socially desirable bias in responding.

Results

Preliminary Analyses

PGRD Scale

Data from the PGRD scale were subjected to a series of tests to investigate the properties of the scale. One sample *t*-tests conducted in SPSS version 25 revealed a significant difference between the degree to which individuals perceived themselves as feminine and masculine ($t(400) = 5.43$ $p < .001$, $d = .27$), with individuals reporting that they saw themselves as significantly more feminine than masculine. Additionally, there was a significant difference between the degree to which individuals perceived close others saw them as feminine and masculine ($t(400) = 8.19$, $p < .001$, $d = .41$). Participants reported that close others saw them as significantly more feminine than masculine. Finally, there was a significant difference between the degree to which individuals perceived distant others saw them as feminine and masculine ($t(400) = 7.73$ $p < .001$, $d = .39$), with participants reporting that distant others saw them as significantly more feminine than masculine. Means and standard deviations for the PGRD items in the total sample are available in Table 1.

There was a significant difference between the degree to which individuals saw themselves as feminine and the degree to which they perceived close others saw them as feminine ($t(400) = -2.10$, $p < .05$, $d = .10$), though the size of this difference was small (Cohen, 1988). Participants reported that close others saw them as significantly more feminine than they saw themselves. There was no significant difference in the degree to which individuals saw themselves as feminine and the degree to which they perceived

distant others saw them as feminine ($t(400) = -.60$, *ns*), or to which individuals perceived that close others saw them as feminine and distant others saw them as feminine ($t(400) = -.60$, *ns)*. There was no significant difference between the degree to which individuals saw themselves as masculine and the degree to which they perceived close ($t(400) = .88$, *ns*) or distant others saw them as masculine ($t(400) = 1.72$, *ns*), nor was there a significant difference between the degree to which individuals perceived close or distant others saw them as masculine ($t(400) = -.04$, *ns*).

SCQ and EDS Scales

Scale and item reliabilities for the SCQ and EDS were both obtained and inspected. While the EDS displayed excellent overall reliability ($\alpha = .95$), the SCQ did not ($\alpha = .65$). Additional analyses were undertaken to investigate the viability of each scale for use in analyses. Both scales were subjected to a CFA in MPlus to determine if each scale was indeed unidimensional as was theoretically suggested. While a one-factor model for the EDS displayed good fit (CFI = .96; TLI = .95; SRMR < .05), a one-factor model for the SCQ did not (CFI = .72; TLI = .64; SRMR = .10). Modification indices suggested that fit for the SCQ could be significantly improved by dropping two out of the ten items on the scale. These items were, “When interacting with others, I feel like they interpret all of my behaviors in terms of my gender expression,” and “Most people have a problem viewing people who depart from gender roles as equals.” After dropping these two items, the revised one-factor model of the SCQ still failed to display adequate fit (CFI = .72; TLI = .66; SRMR = .10). Reliability estimates for the scale after the two

items were dropped were improved, but still at the low end of the acceptable range (α = .73).

Both scales were also subjected to a principal components analysis to cast further light on their factor structure. Prior to this, data were checked for suitability for factor analysis using the Kasier-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sample adequacy and the Bartlett's test of sphericity. The KMO for the EDS was .94, which exceeded the minimum suggested level of .60 (Tabachnik & Fidell, 2001), and the Bartlett's test was significant (χ^2 = 3036.63, $p < .001$). Analysis of the EDS yielded one factor with an eigenvalue greater than 1.0, which accounted for 71.39% of the variance in perceived stigma.

Data from the SCQ with the two previously mentioned items removed also displayed suitability for factor analysis (KMO = .79; Bartlett's test: χ^2 = 988.65, $p <$ .001). Analysis of the SCQ yielded three factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0, which cumulatively accounted for 69.84% of the variance in perceived stigma. Considering the superior fit, factor structure, reliability, and ability to explain variance in perceived stigma of the EDS as compared to the SCQ, the EDS was used as the sole measure of perceived stigma in all ensuing analyses. As such, data from the PGRD scale and the EDS were next subjected to a series of *t*-tests and ANOVAs to determine if significant differences existed by sex, current gender identity, sexual orientation, education, geographic location, or ethnicity.

Sex and Gender

Significant differences between both sexes and genders were observed for the degree to which individuals saw themselves as masculine and feminine, the degree to which individuals perceived close others saw them as masculine and feminine, and the degree to which distant others saw them as masculine and feminine. In both cases, women perceived that they, close, and distant others all saw themselves as significantly more feminine than masculine. Conversely, men perceived that they, close, and distant others saw themselves as significantly more masculine than feminine. Please see Tables 2 and 3 for details. There were no significant differences between the sexes or genders in PGRD-close, PGRD-distant, the magnitude of PGRD, the type of gender role departure, or the direction of gender role departure. An identical pattern of results was found for gender. A significant difference existed between both sexes and genders regarding perceived stigma with males/men perceiving significantly more stigma than females/women (sex: $t(273.10) = 28.88$, $p < .001$, $d = .44$; gender: $t(276.47) = 35.19$, $p < .001$, $d = .50$). The size of this effect was moderate. While gender is generally considered to be a stronger predictor of social outcomes than biological sex (Canary & Hause, 1993; Deaux 1984; Deaux & Major, 1987; Erickson, 2005; Hendrick, 1996; Gianakos, 2002; Stafford, Dainton, & Haas, 2000; Unger 1979), for the sake of thoroughness, both sets of analyses are reported here.

Sexual Orientation

A Welch's *t*-test was used in place of the Student's *t* to examine if significant differences were present between queer- and heterosexually-identified participants and to

account for the discrepancy in sample sizes. Additionally, given the small sample of queer participants, a power analysis was undertaken to guard against Type I or Type II error. Power was estimated at .92 in the sample. Only one significant difference was observed between queer- and heterosexually-identified participants. Queer participants reported significantly more PGRD-distant than did heterosexual participants ($t(1) = 7.64$, $p < .001$, $d = .45$), which is a moderately sized effect. That is to say that queer participants perceived that distant others viewed them as departing from gender roles to a significantly greater degree than their non-queer counterparts. No significant differences in perceived stigma were found between queer- and heterosexually-identified participants.

Education and Location

Participants who reported their highest level of education as being that of high school or GED equivalent saw themselves as significantly more feminine than their more educated counterparts ($F[3, 397] = 6.64$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .05$) and significantly more masculine than those who had completed their college education and/or some/all of their graduate education ($F[3, 397] = 5.08$, $p < .05$, $\eta^2 = .04$), though both effects were small. Participants who reported their highest level of education as being that of high school or GED equivalent perceived that their romantic partners saw them as significantly more masculine and feminine than those who reported their highest level of education as some or all of their graduate degree ($F[3, 397] = 3.03$, $p < .05$, $\eta^2 = .02$; $F[3,397] = 4.28$, $p < .05$, $\eta^2 = .03$, respectively), with the size of this effect also being small. Finally, participants who reported their highest level of education as being that of high school or

GED equivalent perceived that distant others saw them as significantly more feminine and masculine than those who had completed their college education as well as those who had completed some/all of their graduate education (F[3, 397] = 2.50, p = .05, η^2 = .02; F[3, 397] = 2.70, p < .05, η^2 = .02, respectively), though both effects were small. No significant differences were observed in perceived stigma by education level. Additionally, no significant differences were observed in the PGRD dimensions (source, magnitude, type, direction) or in perceived stigma by location.

Ethnicity

Participants who reported their ethnicity as Southeast Asian/Indian or other reported a significantly greater magnitude of PGRD (F[4, 396] = 8.35, p < .005, η^2 = .04) than all other participants, with the size of this difference being small. This finding suggests that those who identified as Southeast Asian/Indian perceived that the degree of their departure from gender roles was significantly greater than the degree of departure perceived by participants who identified as other ethnicities. Observed power in this analysis was estimated at .93.

Outcome variables

All observed outcome variables were also subjected to a similar series of t-tests and ANOVAs to determine if significant differences existed by sex, current gender identity, sexual orientation, education, geographic location, or ethnicity.

Sex and Gender

Significant differences between males and females were observed for commitment, investment, perceived quality of alternatives, intimacy, self uncertainty, partner uncertainty, relationship uncertainty, and self-deceptive enhancement (please see Table 4 for details). Females reported significantly greater levels of commitment, investment, and intimacy. Males reported a significantly higher level of perceived quality of alternatives, as well as significantly greater levels of self, partner, and relationship uncertainty. Males also reported a significantly higher level of self-deceptive enhancement. A nearly identical pattern of results was found for current gender identity (see Table 5), with the only departure being no observed significant difference between genders in regards to self-deceptive enhancement.

As noted earlier, gender has been found to be a more robust predictor of social outcomes when compared to sex (Canary & Hause, 1993; Deaux 1984; Deaux & Major, 1987; Erickson, 2005; Hendrick, 1996; Gianakos, 2002; Stafford, Dainton, & Haas, 2000; Unger 1979). Considering this and the significant differences present by gender identity in the PGRD items, perceived stigma, and the majority of outcome variables, gender identity was used as a control variable in all primary analyses, rather than biological sex.

Sexual Orientation

A Welch's *t*-test was again used in place of the Student's *t* to examine if significant differences were present between queer- and heterosexually-identified participants and to account for the discrepancy in sample sizes. Only one significant difference was observed between queer- and heterosexually-identified participants:

Heterosexual participants reported being significantly more invested in their relationships than their queer counterparts ($t(66.62) = 5.45$, $p < .05$, $d = .35$), though the size of this effect was small. This finding is consistent with results from Lehmiller and Agnew (2006), which indicated that individuals in marginalized relationships, such as same-sex relationships, reported significantly less investment than those in non-marginalized relationships.

Education and Location

Participants who had completed their college degrees (but not started or completed their graduate education) reported significantly higher perceived quality of alternatives and significantly higher intimacy than those who had only started or completed their high school education ($F[3,397] = 3.70$, $p < .05$, $\eta^2 = .03$; $F[3,397] = 3.19$, $p < .05$, $\eta^2 = .02$, respectively), though the size of these effects is small. No other significant differences by education were observed. No significant differences were observed in any outcome variables by location or ethnicity.

PRIMARY ANALYSES

Hypothesis 1

Hypothesis 1 stated that individuals' perceptions that distant others view them as departing from gender roles would be significantly and positively associated with perceived stigma. This hypothesis was assessed via sequential regression with perceived stigma serving as the outcome variable. Self-deceptive enhancement was found to be significantly correlated with-PGRD distant (r (401) = -.14, $p < .01$), and significant differences in PGRD-distant were observed by sexual orientation and ethnicity.

Additionally, significant differences in perceived stigma were observed by gender. As such, self-deceptive enhancement, gender, and sexual orientation were controlled for in the first step of the regression analysis of H1, as were participants' age, and length of participants' relationship. PGRD-distant was entered in the second step. Results of the sequential regression indicated a positive and significant association between perceived stigma and PGRD-distant ($\beta = .12$, $t = 2.68$, $p < .01$), and the strength of this association was small to medium. H1 was supported.

Research Question 1

The first research question asked if individuals' perceptions that their romantic partner views them as departing from gender roles would be significantly associated with perceived stigma. To investigate RQ1, a sequential regression was computed, with perceived stigma being regressed on PGRD-close. Participants' age, length of their relationship, gender, self-deceptive enhancement, and impression management were all controlled for in the first step. Results indicated that PGRD-close was significantly and positively associated with perceived stigma ($\beta = .12$, $t = 2.64$, $p < .01$), with the strength of this association being small to medium.

Research Question 2

Research question 2 asked whether PGRD-close or PGRD-distant would be more strongly related to perceived stigma. To explore this question, perceived stigma was regressed on PGRD-distant and PGRD-close, while controlling for age, length of relationship, gender, sexual orientation, self-deceptive enhancement, and impression management in the first step. Results of the regression analysis revealed that PGRD-close

was more strongly related to perceived stigma (β = .084, t = 1.78, p = .08) than PGRD-distant (β = .081, t = 1.70, p = .10), with the strength of both effects being weak. To investigate whether the strength of these effects were significantly different from one another, 95% confidence intervals were estimated for both PGRD-close (-.012; .147) and PGRD-distant (-.014; .147) via bias corrected bootstrap (1,000 resamples). As noted by Cumming (2009) confidence intervals that do not overlap by more than 50% indicate beta weights that are significantly different from one another. To assess this overlap, half of the average of the overlapping confidence intervals was calculated (.07). This value was then added to the lower bound of the confidence interval for PGRD-close. The resulting value, .06, did not exceed the upper bound of the confidence interval generated for PGRD-distant (.174). Thus, the intervals were found to overlap by more than 50%, and as such the two beta weights were not considered significantly different from one another. Accordingly, the PGRD-distant and PGRD-close exert relatively equal influence on perceived stigma.

Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis 2 stated that the magnitude of PGRD would be significantly and positively associated with perceived stigma. This hypothesis was assessed by performing a sequential regression, wherein perceived stigma was regressed on the magnitude of PGRD, while controlling for age, length of relationship, ethnicity, gender, self-deceptive enhancement, and impression management in the first step. Results indicated that the magnitude of PGRD was significantly and positively associated with perceived stigma (β = .14, t = 3.15, p = .002), and that the strength of this effect was small to moderate.

Hypothesis 3a

Hypothesis 3a stated that the magnitude of PGRD would moderate the association between individuals' perceptions that a close other sees them as departing from gender roles and perceived stigma such that increases in the magnitude of PGRD would be associated with greater perceived stigma. To assess H3a, the PROCESS macro for SPSS (Hayes, 2013) was used. The PROCESS macro allows researchers to compute the presence of indirect effects (i.e., moderation, mediation, and moderated mediation), while also making use of bootstrapping to increase power, and allowing for control of other variables (i.e., age, length of relationship, ethnicity, gender, self-deceptive enhancement, and impression management). Bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples was requested, and all independent variables were mean-centered prior to analysis. Analyses revealed no significant moderating role for the magnitude of PGRD ($\Delta R^2 < .001$, *ns*). H3a was not supported.

Hypothesis 3b

Hypothesis 3b stated that the magnitude of PGRD would moderate the association between individuals' perceptions that distant others see them as departing from gender roles and perceived stigma such that increases in the magnitude of PGRD would be associated with greater perceived stigma. An identical procedure to that specified for H3b was used, except that the two independent variables constituting the interaction were PGRD-distant and magnitude, and sexual orientation was controlled for in the first step. Again, analyses revealed no significant moderating role for the magnitude of PGRD ($\Delta R^2 < .001$, *ns*). H3b was not supported.

Research Question 3

Research question 3 asked if the interaction of type, source, and magnitude of PGRD would contribute to a significant increase in explained variance of perceived stigma, over and above that explained by the interaction of source and magnitude. Two sequential regressions were used to investigate RQ3 (separate sequential regressions were conducted for PGRD-close and PGRD-distant), with perceived stigma serving as the outcome variable. Participants' age, length of relationship, ethnicity, gender, self-deceptive enhancement, and impression management were entered as control variables in the first step of the regression when investigating PGRD-close. Sexual orientation was included as an additional control variable when investigating PGRD-distant. Source, magnitude, and type of PGRD were entered simultaneously in a second step of the regression, with source and magnitude having been centered. Next, and in the third step, each possible two-way interaction of the three variables was entered (source x magnitude, magnitude x type, type x source). Finally, in the fourth step, a three-way interaction term (source x magnitude x type) was entered into the regression. To increase power, bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples was requested.

The first sequential regression in RQ3, investigating PGRD-close in its interaction with magnitude and type, revealed that the interaction of type, PGRD-close and magnitude of PGRD did not contribute to a significant increase in explained variance of perceived stigma, over and above that of the interaction of PGRD-close and magnitude ($\Delta R^2 < .001$, *ns)*. The second sequential regression undertaken to explore RQ3, investigating PGRD-distant, revealed that the interaction of type, PGRD-distant and

magnitude of PGRD did not contribute to a significant increase in explained variance of perceived stigma, over and above that of the interaction of PGRD-distant and magnitude (ΔR^2 = .001, *ns)*.

Research Question 4

Research question 4 asked if the interaction of direction, source, and magnitude of PGRD would contribute to a significant increase in explained variance of perceived stigma, over and above that explained by the interaction of source and magnitude. A sequential regression procedure similar to that described for RQ3 was used to assess RQ4. Theonly difference was that the interaction term entered in the fourth step was created by multiplying the source variable, a centered magnitude variable, and the *direction* variable.

The first sequential regression in RQ4, investigating PGRD-close in its interaction with magnitude and direction, revealed that the interaction of direction, PGRD-close and magnitude of PGRD did not contribute to a significant increase in explained variance of perceived stigma, over and above that of the interaction of PGRD-close and magnitude (ΔR^2 = .003, *ns)*. The second sequential regression undertaken in RQ4, investigating PGRD-distant, revealed that the interaction of direction, PGRD-distant and magnitude of PGRD did not contribute to a significant increase in explained variance of perceived stigma, over and above that of the interaction of PGRD-distant and magnitude (ΔR^2 = .003, *ns)*.

Research Question 5

Research question 5 asked if the interaction of type, direction, source, and magnitude of PGRD would contribute to a significant increase in explained variance of perceived stigma, over and above that explained by the interaction of source and magnitude. A regression procedure similar to that employed in RQ3 and RQ4 was used. All four of the dimensions of PGRD were then individually entered in the second step of the regression. All six of the possible two-way interactions of all four variables were entered in the third step (source x magnitude, source x type, source x direction, magnitude x type, magnitude x direction, type x direction). Then, in the fourth step, the four possible three-way interactions of the four variables were entered (source x magnitude x type, source x magnitude x direction, source x type x direction, magnitude x type x direction). The fifth step included the interaction between source, magnitude, type, and direction of PGRD.

The first sequential regression in RQ5, investigating PGRD-close in its interaction with type, direction, and magnitude, revealed that the interaction of type, direction, PGRD-close, and magnitude of PGRD did not contribute to a significant increase in explained variance of perceived stigma, over and above that of the interaction of PGRD-close and magnitude ($\Delta R^2 < .001$, *ns)*. The second sequential regression undertaken in RQ5, investigating PGRD-distant, revealed that the interaction of type, direction, PGRD-distant, and magnitude of PGRD did not contribute to a significant increase in explained variance of perceived stigma, over and above that of the interaction of PGRD-distant and magnitude ($\Delta R^2 = .001$, *ns)*.

Post-hoc Analyses Associated with H1-H3 and RQ1-5

Inspecting *p*-values associated with each of the interaction terms entered in the fifth step of both regressions in RQ5 revealed that no combination of any or all of the sub-dimensions of PGRD were significantly associated with perceived stigma. However, the results of H1 and H2 both suggested that some sub-dimensions of PGRD (i.e., PRGD-close, PGRD-distant, and magnitude) were significantly associated with perceived stigma. Thus, each of the dimensions was simultaneously regressed on perceived stigma for the purpose of comparing the relative strengths of their associations. Participants' age, the length of their relationship, gender, ethnicity, self-deceptive enhancement, and impression management were all controlled for in the first step of this analysis. The addition of the sub-dimensions of PGRD (source, magnitude, type, and direction) in the second step did contribute to a significant increase in explained variance in perceived stigma, over and above that explained by the control variables alone (ΔR^2 = .02, F [5, 388] = 2.22, p = .05). PGRD-distant was most strongly related to perceived stigma (β = .08), followed by PGRD-close (β = .07), direction of PGRD (β = -.04), type of PGRD (β = .016), and magnitude of PGRD (β = .013), though on their own none of these associations were significant.

Further inspection of the beta values produced in the fifth step of the regressions in RQ5 revealed that of all interactions between the sub-dimensions of PGRD, the interaction between PGRD-close and magnitude (β = .91), as well as the interaction for PGRD-distant and magnitude (β = -.55), accounted for the greatest amount of variance in perceived stigma. These results suggest that when considering both the independent

and interactive influences of the sub-dimensions of PGRD as they relate to perceived stigma, it is the interplay of the source and magnitude sub-dimensions that plays the most important role. Please see Tables 13 and 14 for further details.

Research Questions 6-9

Research questions 6 through 9 asked whether perceived stigma will be significantly associated with commitment, investment, satisfaction, or perceived quality of alternatives respectively. To explore these research questions, four separate sequential regressions were conducted. Perceived stigma served as the outcome variable, and each investment variable was individually entered in the second step of each of the four regressions. As self-deceptive enhancement and impression management were both significantly associated with each of the investment variables (see Table 12), both variables were used as controls in the first step of each analysis. Participants' age, the length of their relationship, and their gender were also controlled for in the first step of each analysis, with two exceptions. First, a significant difference in investment was observed amongst participants of different ethnicities, thus it was included as a control variable in the analysis of RQ7. Secondly, there was no significant difference in satisfaction between genders, thus it was not controlled for in the analysis of RQ8. To increase power, bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples was requested.

Perceived stigma was significantly and negatively associated with commitment (β = -.34, t = -7.27, p < .001), investment (β = -.22, t = -4.62, p < .001), and satisfaction (β = -.17, t = -3.34, p = .001). Perceived stigma was also significantly and positively associated with perceived quality of alternatives (β = .41, t = 7.96, p < .001). The strength

of these associations ranged from small (investment, satisfaction) to medium (commitment, perceived quality of alternatives).

Hypothesis 4

Hypothesis 4 stated that perceived stigma would be significantly and negatively associated with intimacy. To test this hypothesis, a sequential regression between perceived stigma and intimacy, controlling for length of participants' relationship, their age, their gender, self-deceptive enhancement, and impression management was performed. To increase power, bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples was requested. Perceived stigma was significantly and negatively associated with intimacy (β = -.12, t = -2.27, $p < .05$), with the strength of the association being small. H4 was supported.

Hypothesis 5a-c

Hypotheses 5a-c stipulated that perceived stigma would be significantly and positively associated with self, partner, and relationship uncertainty, respectively. To test these hypotheses, separate partial sequential regressions between perceived stigma and self, partner, and relationship uncertainty, controlling for length of participants' relationship, participants' age, their gender, self-deceptive enhancement, and impression management were each performed. To increase power, bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples was requested. Perceived stigma was significantly and positively related to self uncertainty (β = .45, t = 9.68, $p < .001$), partner uncertainty (β = .39, t = 8.19, $p < .001$), and relationship uncertainty (β = .35, t = 7.29, $p < .001$). The strength of these associations were all moderate to large. H5a-c were all supported.

Post-hoc Analysis of Hypothesis 5

Self, partner, and relationship uncertainty were all simultaneously regressed on perceived stigma, while controlling for the length of the relationship, participants' age, gender, self-deceptive enhancement, and impression management. The purpose of this post-hoc analysis was to investigate the relative strength of these associations by way of comparing beta values. Results suggested that self uncertainty was most strongly associated with perceived stigma ($\beta = .34$, $p < .001$), followed by partner uncertainty ($\beta = .15$, $p < .05$), and relationship uncertainty ($\beta = -.02$, *ns*). The strength of each of these associations was weak.

Hypotheses 6a-h

Hypotheses 6a-h each set forth a mediating relationship, wherein perceived stigma would mediate the relationship between an aggregate measure of PGRD and (a) commitment, (b) investment, (c) satisfaction, (d) perceived quality of alternatives (e) intimacy, (f) self uncertainty, (g) partner uncertainty, and (h) relationship uncertainty. To create the aggregate measure of PGRD, an interaction term was computed, which was comprised of an averaged source variable and the magnitude variable. The rationale belying this calculation stemmed from the post hoc analyses of H1-H3 and RQ1-RQ5. These analyses revealed that it was the interaction of the source and magnitude sub-dimensions of PGRD that exerted the strongest influence on perceived stigma.

To assess H6a-h, the PROCESS macro was used again, and age, length of participants' relationship, gender, ethnicity, self-deceptive enhancement, and impression management were controlled for in each analysis (with the exception of gender in H6c, as

above). To increase power, bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples was requested. Bootstrapping has been identified as a highly preferable technique when assessing mediation (Hayes, 2014). Thus, all confidence intervals produced in association with the mediation analyses were bootstrap-corrected and accelerated. Confidence intervals that were wholly above or below 0 suggested a significant mediating role for perceived stigma. Additionally, Sobel's tests for mediation were computed, and significant values of the results (represented by a *z* statistic) were interpreted as further evidence of a significant mediating role for perceived stigma.

Commitment

In testing for mediation the PROCESS macro assessed the direct effect of both PGRD and perceived stigma on commitment. These results showed that both PGRD (β = -.01, p = .06) and perceived stigma (β = -.38, $p < .001$) were negatively associated with commitment, though the strength of the association was non-significant for PGRD, and moderate for perceived stigma[i]. An estimate of the total effect of PGRD on commitment, through perceived stigma, was significant (β = -.02, t = -2.62, $p < .05$, 95%, C.I. = -.03, -.004). A confidence interval generated for the mediating model, as well as a Sobel's test suggested that perceived stigma significantly mediated the relationship between PGRD and commitment (95% C.I. = -.02, -.002; z = -2.27, $p < .05$). H6a was supported.

Investment

Perceived gender role departure was not directly significantly associated with investment (β = -.01, p = .07), though perceived stigma was, though weakly (β = -.22, $p <$ .001). However, additional analysis revealed that the total effect of PGRD on investment,

through stigma, was significant (β = -.01, t = -2.36, p < .05, 95%, C.I. = -.02, -.002), though this effect was weak as well. Inspection of the confidence interval generated for the meditational model suggested significant mediation (95%, C.I. = -.01, -.001). A Sobel's test suggested that significant mediation of the relationship between PGRD and investment was present (z = -2.10, p < .05) as well. H6b was supported.

Satisfaction

Perceived gender role departure and perceived stigma were both significantly and negatively associated with satisfaction (β = -.02, p < .05; β = -.19, p < .005), with the strength of each association being weak. A confidence interval generated for the meditational model, as well as a Sobel's test both suggested a significant mediating role for perceived stigma in the relationship between PGRD and investment (95%, C.I. = -.012, -.001; z = -1.86, p < .05). H6c was supported.

Perceived Quality of Alternatives

Results showed that PGRD was not significantly associated with the perceived quality of alternatives (β = .01, p = .33), but that perceived stigma (β = .61, p < .001) was in a significant, positive, and strong manner. An estimation of the total effect of PGRD on perceived quality of alternatives, through perceived stigma, was not significant (β = .02, t = 1.82, p = .07, 95%, C.I. = -.001, .032). Yet, a confidence interval for the meditational model suggested that perceived stigma significantly mediated the relationship between PGRD and perceived quality of alternatives (95% C.I. = .003, .035), as did a Sobel's test computed for the model (z = 2.29, p < .05). H6d was supported.

Intimacy

Perceived gender role departure was not directly significantly associated with intimacy (β = .001, p = .8), though perceived stigma was (β = -.12, p < .05), with the strength of this association being weak. Follow up analyses further revealed that the total effect of PGRD on intimacy, through perceived stigma, was also not significant (β < .001, t = -.03, p = .98, 95% C.I. = -.01, .01). A confidence interval generated for the meditational model was inconclusive, as the confidence interval included, but did not straddle 0 (95% C.I. = .007, .000). However, a Sobel's test generated for the meditational model did suggest significant mediation (z = -1.64, p < .05). H6e was not supported.

Self Uncertainty

Results showed that PGRD was significantly directly associated with self uncertainty (β = .01, p = .05), as was perceived stigma (β = .59, p < .001), and strongly so. A confidence interval generated for the meditational model, as well as the Sobel's test indicated a significant mediating role for perceived stigma in the relationship between PGRD and self uncertainty (95%, C.I. = .003, .031; z = 2.33, p < .05). H6f was supported.

Partner Uncertainty

While PGRD was not directly significantly associated with partner uncertainty (β = .01, p = .06), perceived stigma was (β = .49, p < .001), and in a strong manner. The total effect of PGRD on partner uncertainty, through stigma, was estimated to be significant (β = .02, t = 2.67, p < .01, 95%, C.I. = .005, .031). The confidence interval for the meditational model, as well as the Sobel's test generated for the meditational model

suggested significant mediation of the relationship between PGRD and partner uncertainty by perceived stigma (95%, C.I. = .002, .026; $z = 2.30$, $p < .05$). H6g was supported.

Relationship Uncertainty

Results indicated that PGRD was directly significantly associated with relationship uncertainty ($\beta = .01$, $p = .05$), as was perceived stigma ($\beta = .42$, $p < .001$) in a moderately strong fashion. The confidence interval as well as the Sobel's test generated for the meditational model suggested significant mediation of the relationship between PGRD and partner uncertainty by perceived stigma (95%, C.I. = .002, .023; $z = 2.27$, $p < .05$). H6h was supported.

Discussion

The purpose of this study has been to investigate the phenomenon of perceived gender role departure (PGRD) and how it might be intertwined with individuals' perceptions of stigma related to PGRD, and finally how that perceived stigma might also be related to the climate of individuals' romantic relationships. This study was rooted in biosocial construction theory (W. Wood & Eagly, 2013), which provides a lens for understanding both the genesis and persistence of gender roles. The study also drew from Meisenbach's (2010) expanded definition of stigma, which articulates that stigmatizing attributes need not fall into the three classical categories outlined by Goffman (1963) nor must they result in social recognition, communication, or material loss, as argued by Link and Phelan (2001). Meisenbach's (2010) definition allows for any and all individuals who perceive that they may be discriminated against on the basis of their identity to be recognized as potentially stigmatized. As this perspective relates to the current study, the personal and relational experiences of those who depart from gender roles and potentially feel stigmatized as a result of this were investigated. The nature of PGRD was also examined, with specific attention to proposing and investigating the characteristics of its constituent sub-dimensions: Source, magnitude, type, and direction.

Overall, evidence for the strength of biosocial construction theory, as well as the viability of a novel measure of PGRD were both gained from this study, as evidenced through support for many of the proposed hypotheses. The specifics of these results will be discussed in greater detail below. However, the study had two additional and important tasks and outputs that must be mentioned. First, this project sought to resist

essentialist and binary notions and discourses about gender, by considering how stigma might affect people of all and any genders, rather than focusing on differences between the genders. To this end, the influence of gender was held equal for all participants via statistical control. Even with the influence of gender removed, most of the hypotheses set forth were supported, though the effects associated with these results were small. The interpretation of these results and effect sizes will be discussed in the coming pages.

Secondly, this project sought to push back upon previously articulated empirical findings regarding gender roles that could be used to suggest that departing from gender roles might be harmful to individuals and their relationships. To this end, the project located perceived stigma as a mediating mechanism that could be used as a strategic intervention point for remediating the suggested deleterious effects of departing from gender norms. The findings from this study suggest that perceived stigma does act as a significant mediator in the relationship between PGRD and relational outcomes. This knowledge can be used to place our focus on the role of perceived stigma as a phenomenon that can and has been successfully remediated in a variety of contexts (D. Gray, 2002; Hussey & Bisconti, 2010; O'Leary, Kennedy, Pappas-DeLuca, Nkete, Beck, & Galavotti, 2007). Taken in concert with the previously identified task of resisting essentialist conceptualizations of gender, these findings present an opportunity for intervention and remediation of undesirable relational effects of perceived stigma for all people, rather than limiting our thinking to solutions for only those who ascribe to one of two conventional gender categories. More specifics on how this task might begin to be achieved can be found below.

MEASURE TWICE, CUT ONCE

Before turning to a discussion of the results of this study, it seems appropriate to first discuss some of the methodological tools, specifically new measures, that generated these results. This study was the first to conceptualize, operationalize, and utilize a novel scale for measuring PGRD. Data obtained from this scale indicated that the scale did indeed assess its three intended dimensions: Perceptions of the self, perceptions of how close others view the self, and perceptions of how distant others see the self. Further evidence for the functionality of the scale can be inferred from its convergent validity. That is to say that data from the scale correlated with other constructs in the manner expected and formally laid out in the study's hypotheses. It is worth noting, however, that many of the effect sizes associated with the results produced by the scale were small to moderate. This is not entirely unexpected, as many of the effect sizes seen in the social sciences fall in this range (Levine, 2011). In the case of this study in particular, small effect sizes may in fact be something to be celebrated. These small values might be taken to suggest that the importance that society places on gender is beginning to wane, as we move towards a future that is "post-gender" (Donnelly & Twenge, 2017, p. 560; Good & Sanchez, 2017).

While the successful use of a new measure in a single study by no means revolutionizes the measurement of a construct, it does provide a potential starting point for other scholars to begin the important tasks of replication and validation of results from the measure with diverse samples and in diverse contexts. If replication and validation attempts are successful, then this new measure might be used to continue to

generate useful knowledge regarding individuals who feel stigmatized on the basis of their gender identity. Specifically, we might use this knowledge to consider designing educational or intervention programs to work against the forces that lead stigmatized individuals to perceive their relationships to be of lower quality than their non-stigmatized counterparts (Doyle & Molix, 2014b). Finally, use of this new measure of PGRD contributes to the continued search for operationalizations of the experience of gender that move us beyond simple categories. Donnelly and Twenge (2017) note that the great stalwart of gender measurement and categorization, the Bem Sex Role Inventory (Bem; 1974) may no longer be appropriate for use in the face of changing gender role stereotypes (Haines, Deaux, & Lofaro, 2016). Measures that assess gender as a more expansive experience are currently being pioneered in fields allied with communication (Geist, Reynolds, & Gaytán, 2017; Magliozzi, Saperstein, & Westbrook, 2016; Westbrook & Saperstein, 2015). These measures are united in that they contend that simply providing new categories or "check-boxes" for individuals to use to express their gender is "not enough" (Westbrook & Saperstein, p. 534), and that other, more creative solutions must be employed if researchers are to capture the complexity of gender as it operates in social relationships.

A final comment on methodology concerns the use of the Stigma Consciousness Questionnaire (SCQ; Pinel, 1999) and the Everyday Discrimination Scale (EDS; Forman, Williams, & Jackson, 1997; Williams, et al., 1997) as measures of perceived stigma. As noted in a previous section of this study, consensus surrounding a single best measure of perceived stigma does not currently exist. It was necessary to make meaningful

adaptations to both scales in order to suit them for use in this study. Data produced from these adapted scales indicated that the modifications made to the EDS were more successful than those made to the SCQ. However, the SCQ has previously been used successfully to assess stigma in a variety of different populations (Chang & Bazarova, 2016; Lewis, Derlega, Griffin, & Krowinski, 2003; Mosley & Rosenberg, 2007; Pinel, 1999, 2002; Pinel & Paulin, 2005; Schmalz & Kerstetter, 2006). Thus it may behoove future researchers interested in the phenomenon of perceived stigma to consider employing multiple measures of perceived stigma during the data collection phase of their projects to continue to assess which measure is most suitable for the sample at hand. With these methodological considerations acknowledged, let us now turn to a discussion of the results of this study.

PERCEIVED GENDER ROLE DEPARTURE: MORE THAN THE SUM OF SOME OF ITS PARTS

Source

The first group of hypotheses and research questions attempted to clarify whether and how the source of PGRD might be related to perceived stigma. Specifically, H1 posited that individuals' perception that *distant* others view them as departing from gender roles would be significantly and positively associated with perceived stigma. Research question 1 asked if this same association would be present when individuals perceived that *close* others saw them as departing from gender roles. In both cases, results indicated that both PGRD-distant and PGRD-close were significantly and positively associated with perceived stigma. Analysis of RQ2 revealed that PGRD-close was

slightly more strongly associated with perceived stigma, but that the difference between the strengths of these associations was not significant.

The results of H1 are not particularly surprising, given the previously reviewed findings which suggested that individuals are aware of the likelihood of being socially sanctioned by distant others for departing from gender roles (Gilbert & Rader, 2001; Lazare, 1987; Lindsey & Zakahi, 2006; Reidy, Sloan, & Zeichner, 2009a; Rudman, 1998; Thoits, 1985; Watson, Corrigan, & Larson, 2007; W. Wood & Eagly, 2013). Taken with the results of RQ1, it seems that when individuals perceive that others do not view their gender identity in the same way that it is viewed by themselves, regardless of whether those others are close or distant, feelings of marginalization on the basis of gender may arise. What is perhaps most interesting though, is that the strength of the associations between PGRD-close and PGRD-distant and perceived stigma were not materially different from one another. Both symbolic interactionism (Mead, 1934) and relational framing theory (Dillard, Solomon, & Samp, 1996) would suggest that the nature of the relationship between the self and an other should affect the character and intensity of the judgments that the other makes about the self, and further the meta-perceptions that the self creates about the judgments made by the other. If this were the case, then one might expect to see a significant difference in the strength of the associations between PGRD-close, PGRD-distant, and perceived stigma.

Instead, the findings of H1, RQ1, and RQ2 may better explicated by a self-verification perspective (Swann, 1990), which proposes that individuals desire to feel seen by others (close and distant) in the same way that they see themselves. From this

perspective, the nature of the relationship between the self and the other is less important than the degree of concordance that individuals believe exists between the two sets of conceptions of their gender identity. If individuals perceive that their estimation of their gender identity is not matched by others, they may be more likely to feel rejected or devalued than if their true self is known (Cast & Burke, 2002; Murray, Rose, Bellavia, Holmes, & Kusche, 2002); feelings that are not dissimilar to those that accompany having a concealable stigmatized identity. Additionally, most individuals hold positive views of themselves (Schmitt & Allik, 2005), and by extension they may also hold positive views of their gender identity. Feeling that others do not see this aspect of individuals' identity in a similar light, or that others perceive individuals' gender identity in a negative way, might reasonably spark feelings in individuals that they may be evaluated or treated aversively (i.e., stigmatized) on the basis of their gender identity. Thus, while the findings from H1 and RQ1 and 2 may not align perfectly with the originally specified theoretical frameworks, they can still be logically understood from a different perspective.

Magnitude

Hypotheses 2 and 3 sought to add nuance to the findings of H1, RQ1, and RQ2, by asking if the magnitude, another sub-dimension of PGRD, might also be associated with perceived stigma, and also if magnitude might moderate the association between the source of PGRD and perceived stigma. Results showed that the magnitude of PGRD was indeed positively and significantly associated with perceived stigma, meaning that as perceived departure from gender roles grew in intensity, so too did individuals'

appreciation of the degree of stigmatization that they experienced. However, results associated with H3a and H3b revealed that the increases magnitude of PGRD did not significantly amplify the connection between the PGRD-close or PGRD-distant and perceived stigma. These non-significant results may, though, be somewhat misleading. Post-hoc analyses associated with H3a and b revealed that of all the possible interactions among the sub-dimensions of PGRD, the interaction of source and magnitude displayed the strongest association with perceived stigma. Thus, while tests for moderation may have failed to reach statistical significance, this does not necessarily mean that the interaction is not manifestly felt in the lived experience of individuals. Rather than being dismayed by findings that are surprising or contradict expected outcomes, Shields (2013) points out that these "fault lines" (p. 429) between findings and feelings are exactly the places that researchers should focus their attention on as they move forward. Thus an exciting possibility for future research lies in more deeply probing the interaction of the source and magnitude sub-dimensions of PGRD. A qualitative approach may prove fruitful here, as evidence for the practical significance (Kirk, 1996) of this interaction may be more properly gleaned by listening to the voices of individuals who experience the confluence of these sub-dimensions in their day-to-day lives. Another profitable path may lie in developing a more nuanced quantitative measure of magnitude, which might be achieved by disaggregating individuals' meta-perceptions of how close and distant others see them in the calculation of the final value of the magnitude sub-dimension.

Type and Direction

Research questions 3-5 sought to uncover whether the interaction between the sub-dimensions of type and direction and the sub-dimensions of source and magnitude might contribute to a significant increase in explained variance of perceived stigma. Said another way, these research questions were aimed at discovering exactly what combination of the constituent components of PGRD might be most appropriate to consider when contemplating the relationship between PGRD and perceived stigma. The results of these RQs revealed that the interaction between type and direction, and source and magnitude did not significantly increase the amount of variance explained in perceived stigma. Thus, as was suggested earlier, it seems that a particular type or direction of PGRD is not required in order for perceived stigma to occur. Instead, it may be that if individuals feel that the magnitude of their departure is of a size that is sufficient to be perceived by close or distant others, then feelings of being stigmatized may be evoked.

While post-hoc analyses associated with RQs 3-5 revealed that the combination of all of the sub-dimensions of PGRD did contribute to a significant increase in explained variance of perceived stigma, the contribution of each of these sub-dimensions on their own was not significant. One might suggest, then, that PGRD must be more than a simple sum of its parts. This evidence suggests that researchers should consider how the parts of PGRD operate together before seeking to understand how the phenomenon is related to other outcomes. Pointing again to the post-hoc analyses associated with RQs 3-5, it

seems that the interplay of source and magnitude is the permutation of sub-components that is most meaningfully associated with perceived stigma.

Although researchers and readers may be disappointed by the presence of non-significant results associated with the type and direction sub-dimension, non-significant results may be just as informative as significant results. As noted by Levine (2011, 2013), such findings may direct researchers' attention towards those factors associated with a phenomenon that *do* have a meaningful impact on other variables, and away from those that do not. In light of this, it may be most useful for researchers interested in gender role departure to focus their efforts on the sub-dimensions of source and magnitude as they go forward. Abandoning a focus on the type of gender role departure that occurs also will allow scholars to take another step away from gender binaries, as it places attention on sub-dimensions that are relevant to people of all genders, rather than possibly reifying oppressive, outdated, and diametrically-opposed stereotypes associated with gender roles. Now that the sub-components of PGRD as they relate to perceived stigma have been discussed, it is time to turn to the connections between perceived stigma and a number of relational outcome variables.

DARK CLOUDS AND SILVER LININGS: STIGMA IN ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS

As was noted in the earlier stages of this dissertation, a wealth of literature regarding perceptions of stigma, disclosure, and relational outcome variables already exists. Much of this literature draws on individuals who feel stigmatized on the basis of their health, their ethnicity, or their sexual orientation. A similarly rich literature and set of cohesive findings regarding perceived stigma stemming from gender identity is one

place that the field of communication has yet to flourish. Of the literature that does exist that speaks obliquely to this topic, findings generally suggest that individuals who feel that they are stigmatized experience decreased overall relational quality (Doyle & Molix, 2014b) with particular respect to intimacy, and investment model variables (e.g., commitment, satisfaction, investment, and perceived quality of alternatives). Additionally, the current project suggested that this trend might also extend to perceptions of self, partner, and relationship uncertainty, such that individuals that perceived that they are stigmatized would experience heightened levels of all three of these dimensions of relational uncertainty. With one exception (to be discussed shortly) the previously found pattern of results, as well as the hypothesized extensions were found in this study as well. Perceived stigma was negatively and significantly associated with commitment, investment, satisfaction, and intimacy, while being significantly and positively associated with all three dimensions of relational uncertainty. As the logic that might serve to explain some of these findings has been elucidated earlier in this writing, for the sake of brevity, they will not be repeated here.

There is, however, one surprise among the findings of this set of research questions and hypotheses that deserves additional consideration. In this study, perceived stigma was *positively* associated with the perceived quality of alternatives to individuals' current relationships. While this may seem curious at first, it is not so strange when one returns to some of the potential positive outcomes that Meyer (2003) and Testa, Harbath, Peta, Balsam, and Bockting (2015) lay out in their minority stress and gender minority stress and resilience models. According to the minority stress model (Meyer, 2003),

while stigmatization may create a hostile or stressful social environment that may contribute to negative mental health outcomes via expectations of rejection and internalized stigma, there are also some positive outcomes that are associated with feeling stigmatized. These positive outcomes are group cohesiveness and solidarity. In a similar vein, the gender minority stress and resilience model (Testa, et al., 2015) suggests that while feeling stigmatized precipitates a set of both internal and external stressors that may lead to negative mental health outcomes, there are also two resiliency factors: community connectedness and pride. Of relevance to the findings regarding perceived quality of alternatives, it is possible that some individuals who feel that they are stigmatized have selectively affiliated and established themselves with and within communities of similarly stigmatized others, as has been suggested by previous theorizing on responses to stigma (Kaiser, Vick, & Major, 2006; Miller & Kaiser, 2001). It is possible that these individuals, those who feel that they are stigmatized on the basis of their gender identity, also feel that they know and have access to others who share in their experience as a result of being enmeshed in a community of empathetic others. Being deeply understood by a partner is likely a desirable quality and may explain the surprising positive association between feeling stigmatized and perceived quality of alternatives. Still, in looking at the results derived from RQ6-9, H4, and H5a-c at large, one might be tempted to conclude that those who feel stigmatized on the basis of their gender identity are fated to a relational future that is not as bright as those who do not. However, this troubling thought can be assuaged in some measure by turning to the results of H6a-g.

The Mediator is the Message: Stigma's Mediating Role

Hypotheses 6a-g sought to locate perceived stigma as a mediating mechanism that might operate in between PGRD and individuals' perceptions of their romantic relationships. In seven out of the eight proposed relationships, the mediating role of perceived stigma was found to be significant. This finding is an example of an exciting intersection between both statistical and practical significance. Given that perceived stigma acts as a mediating mechanism, scholars and practitioners may be able to capitalize upon perceived stigma as a strategic disruption point in the chain of phenomena that leads individuals who feel stigmatized on the basis of their gender identity to also perceive lower relational quality. The need for such research was recently identified by Cao, Fang, Fine, Ju, Lan, and Zhou (2017), as they proposed that as a field we have reached a point of diminishing returns when it comes to continuing to document the same association between marginalization and well-being. Instead, a more productive avenue for future research lies in identifying the ways that people might transform their feelings of stigmatization or, if this is not possible, how to most effectively respond to those feelings in their original form.

Shih's (2004) writing on resilience in the face of stigma offers that when individuals are confronted with feeling stigmatized they may respond in ways that allow them to merely cope or in ways that allow them to feel empowered. In the former case of coping, individuals who feel stigmatized attempt to avoid the negative consequences of their identity, and this type of disengaging response is seen as relatively non-adaptive (Miller & Kaiser, 2001). In the latter case of empowering responses, individuals become

more active agents in determining their life outcomes, and see the opportunity to overcome the challenges that feeling stigmatized presents as energizing rather than depleting. There have been many examples of such empowering responses in the recent literature on stigma. For example, adult children of alcoholics sometimes experience what has been called *positive aspect stigma*, a cognitive phenomenon wherein individuals see the courtesy stigma that they carry as a result of their parents' alcoholism as a factor that has allowed them to become stronger individuals rather than something that has detracted from their personal development (Haverfield & Theiss, 2015). In conversations with individuals in commuter marriages, Lindemann (2017) found that couples enjoyed some of the unique opportunities afforded to them by their non-traditional marriage, in spite of society's continued privileging of more conventional marriages (Cherlin, 2004; Coontz, 2005; Duncan & Philips, 2010; Liu & Wilkinson, 2017), suggesting that these couples were able to recast their potentially stigmatized living arrangement as a boon rather than a burden. Further, queer individuals who feel that traditional heterosexual scripts for courtship do not suit them have taken the opportunity to create new and more satisfying courtship scripts that fit their needs (Lamont, 2017). Finally, women who were made particularly aware of negative stereotypes regarding their ability to complete mathematical tasks actively resisted those gender stereotypes and did not evince the usual decrements in performance associated with stereotype threat (Clark, Thiem, Hoover, & Habashi, 2017). Each of these findings can be extended to suggest that if individuals are able to see their potentially stigmatized status as a launch pad towards, rather than a

closed door between, themselves and personal and relational growth, then the some of the detrimental effects of stigma may be remediated.

A second set of strategies for dismantling the potentially negative effects of perceived stigma can be found in Meisenbach's (2010) writing on how individuals can choose to communicatively respond to moments in which they feel stigmatized by others. She offers a two-axis categorization scheme, in which individuals can either accept or reject notions that a stigma applies to the self, and may also accept or reject the public's evaluation of that stigma. The focus here will be on individuals who perceive that they are stigmatized, and thus accept that the stigma applies to the self, but reject the public's negative view of said stigma. Meisenbach theorizes a few options for these individuals, but two seem most relevant to the particular case of being stigmatized on the basis of gender identity. First, individuals may use a strategy of *refocusing*, wherein they seek to draw attention away from the stigmatized aspect of their identity, and towards other non-stigmatized identity categories. An example of this might be individuals who feel that they are stigmatized on the basis of their gender identity drawing attention to their intelligence, kindness, or competence in another realm. Another strategy proffered by Meisenbach (2010) is that of *transcendence*. Here, individuals who feel stigmatized on the basis of their gender identity attempt to convince others that this stigmatized identity may actually engender more good than harm. For example, individuals who feel marginalized for not being "masculine enough" might point to how this allows them to be more sensitive and emotional (traits not stereotypically associated with Western masculinity). Similarly, individuals who feel stigma related to not being "feminine

enough" might argue that this has given them the chance to be strong leaders in corporations, communities, and families (characteristics and positions not ascribed to typical conceptions of femininity). Investigating whether, when, and to what degree of success individuals who perceive that they are stigmatized call on empowerment, refocusing, and transcendence strategies may be an important new step in stigma research.

HUMILITY AND HOPEFULNESS: LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Before concluding this discussion, it is important to note the ways in which the present investigation is somewhat flawed. The first limitation of this study is the untested nature of two of its central measures. While the PGRD scale and the modified EDS both displayed encouraging statistical properties, they will both need to be used many more times, and in many more contexts before they can be established as valid and reliable instruments of measurement. Another limitation of this study lies in its results. Though significant results were found in many cases, the effect sizes were sometimes moderate, but most often quite small. This is normative in social science research (Levine, 2011) it does cast some doubt on whether this project has identified the variables that might provide the most insight or greatest opportunity for intervention. One reason for these small effects may lie in the selection of outcome variables. Recently, Kito (2017) identified that four core aspects of relationship quality (caring, honestly, loyalty, and communication) can adequately capture the diversity and variance in relationship quality generated previously by an amalgamation of seven variables (commitment, intimacy, love, passion, satisfaction, trust, and relationship quality). Future researchers may wish to

use these consolidated core aspects, rather than a wider range of outcome variables, to see if they yield larger effects. Another limitation of this study is that while it draws on a sample that is considerably more diverse than the usual undergraduate samples used in cross-sectional research, this study is still just that: Cross-sectional research. As a result of this, the findings can only speak to associations between variables, without being able to put forth causal relationships. For example, it is entirely possible that feeling stigmatized on the basis of gender identity precipitates increased feelings of PGRD, rather than PGRD being the cognition that initiates feelings of perceived stigma. A further limitation stemming from the cross-sectional nature of this study is that it does not allow for inferences about the relationship between PGRD, perceived stigma, and relational stability to be made. These weaknesses might find a fairly simple remedy in a future project that assesses the same variables over multiple time points.

A final, but important, limitation of this study is simultaneously a considerable strength. When assessing aspects of PGRD, this study intentionally allowed participants to self-define what the terms masculinity and femininity mean. Previous measures of gender have relied upon caricature-esque stereotypes of conventional gender roles that were more prevalent in the 1970s and 1980s (e.g., BSRI, Bem, 1974) than they are today. The methodological choice made in this study to move away from measures like this, and allow for self-definition instead, may increase the validity of the PGRD measure, though it may also meaningfully detract from its reliability. However, different individuals hold vastly different definitions of what exactly masculinity and femininity mean to them, and it is likely that individuals consider far more than just personality traits (as specified in

the BSRI) when considering their own perception of their gender identity and when constructing the meta-perceptions of others. When researchers impose their own definition of these words, masculinity and femininity, on their studies and respondents, it is quite possible that they miss the meaning of the words to the participants, who are the individuals from whom researchers intend to derive their knowledge. Thus, while allowing participants to self-define masculinity and femininity may come at a cost to operational clarity and reliability, it contributes in equal measure to conceptual fidelity and validity.

Even with these shortcomings in mind, there are some interesting projects that might logically flow next from the knowledge derived from this study. A first set of inquiries might consider how social support may act as a further mediating mechanism, specifically in the sense that it might mediate the relationship between perceived stigma and undesirable declines in perceived relational quality. There is some research which indirectly supports this notion. Researchers have found that experienced stigma is associated with negative mental health outcomes (i.e., depression) in stigmatized populations *through* a mechanism of impaired social support (Mickelson, Biehle, Chong, & Gordon, 2017; Pollitt, Muraco, Grossman, & Russell, 2017). However, the populations in these studies felt stigmatized on the basis of either a mental illness or sexual orientation. As such, it might be worthwhile for researchers to consider if social support might play a mediating role in the relationship between perceived stigma based on gender identity and relational outcome variables, rather than mental health outcomes.

A second potential line of research extending from this study might consider how socioeconomic status and education interact with gender role departure in relationship formation. Specifically, two recent studies have found that women who are of a lower socioeconomic status or education level seek men who are more egalitarian in terms of their gender roles and attitudes, and when non-egalitarian partners are not available, women are choosing to remain single rather than enter into undesirably gendered partnerships (Pessin, 2018; Sherman, 2017). Insofar as one is willing to conceive of increased egalitarianism as representing a departure from more conventional or typical gender roles, then it seems that women at lower levels of education and socioeconomic status may be more tolerant of gender role departure than others. An interesting complementary finding is that men in states with a lower average socioeconomic status are becoming increasingly egalitarian in their gender role attitudes over time (Lee, Tufis, & Alwin, 2017), perhaps as a way to make themselves more attractive to women, if they seek to be in a mixed-sex partnership. Thus, as our political discourse is not shy about reminding us, the influence of the economy knows no bounds, and in fact may be an important factor to consider when attempting to understand the operation of PGRD and perceived stigma associated with departing from typical gender roles in different social, if not geographic, locations.

Concluding Remarks

In closing this writing, it seems important to reiterate that there have been two sets of tasks that have guided this dissertation. At a more microscopic level, the purpose of this work has been to enrich the body of knowledge that exists surrounding gender, gender identity, perceived stigma, and how each of these aforementioned constructs might interact with individuals' perceptions of their romantic relationships. The success or failure of this project in completing that task remains to be judged by a jury of anonymous colleagues and peers. There has, however, been a second set of tasks that were just as important as the first. These tasks were to engage in science that openly rejects the myth of "value-free research" (p. 401, Shields, 2016); a science that is rooted in the personal and political belief that people across the continuum of genders and gender identities deserve to feel competent, valued, respected, and loved. To this end, this dissertation was shaped to be one that calls upon the radical potential of feminist research to produce knowledge that can move us closer towards this end today (aligning with Kuhn, 1962), instead of in the distant future as suggested by Cohen (1990). As West and Zimmerman (2009) point out in a commentary on their classic writing on "doing gender," it is not an undoing of gender that we should seek. As human beings, our embodied nature seems to preclude the possibility of escaping gender categorization. What West and Zimmerman do advocate, though, and what this dissertation seeks to contribute to, is a *re*doing of thinking about gender in ways that do not further the oppressive systems that it supports at present.

Table 1: Means and Standard Deviations for PGRD Items and PGRD Dimensions

	Mean	*SD*
Self-perceived Femininity	4.38	2.13
Self-perceived Masculinity	3.80	2.16
Distant other - Femininity	4.44	2.14
Distant other - Masculinity	3.61	2.22
Close other - Femininity	4.60	2.21
Close other - Masculinity	3.70	2.27
PGRD - Close Other	1.22	1.94
PGRD - Distant Other	1.10	1.48
Magnitude	1.04	1.42
Type - Masculine	-.14	.99
Type - Feminine	.14	.98
Direction	.00	.93

Table 2: Means, Standard Deviations, and T-tests for PGRD Items by Biological Sex

	Sex	*N*	*M*	*SD*	*t*
Self-perceived Femininity	*Male*	158	2.34	1.47	-24.47*
	Female	243	5.70	1.26	
Self-perceived Masculinity	*Male*	158	5.94	1.15	27.89*
	Female	243	2.40	1.38	
Distant other - Femininity	*Male*	158	2.50	1.74	-19.95*
	Female	243	5.70	1.26	
Distant other - Masculinity	*Male*	158	5.75	1.31	24.66*
	Female	243	2.22	1.45	
Close other - Femininity	*Male*	158	2.62	1.74	-20.00*
	Female	243	5.89	1.36	
Close other - Masculinity	*Male*	158	5.85	1.36	23.69*
	Female	243	2.30	1.53	

*. $p < .001$

Table 3: Means, Standard Deviations, and T-tests for PGRD Items by Current Gender Identity

	Gender	*N*	*M*	*SD*	*t*
Self-perceived Femininity	*Men*	160	2.39	1.52	-23.29*
	Women	234	5.75	1.22	
Self-perceived Masculinity	*Men*	160	5.89	1.22	27.25*
	Women	234	2.35	1.34	
Distant other - Femininity	*Men*	160	2.55	1.77	-19.66*
	Women	234	5.73	1.23	
Distant other - Masculinity	*Men*	160	5.69	1.40	23.72*
	Women	234	2.20	1.46	
Close other - Femininity	*Men*	160	2.64	1.74	-20.74*
	Women	234	5.97	1.28	
Close other - Masculinity	*Men*	160	5.81	1.42	24.11*
	Women	234	2.24	1.48	

*. $p < .001$

Table 4: Means, Standard Deviations, and T-tests for Outcome Variables by Biological Sex

	Sex	*N*	*M*	*SD*	*t*
Commitment	*Male*	158	5.35	1.21	-5.91*
	Female	243	6.06	1.13	
Investment	*Male*	158	5.50	1.12	-2.76*
	Female	243	5.80	1.02	
Satisfaction	*Male*	158	5.47	1.21	-1.28
	Female	243	5.64	1.37	
Perceived Quality of Alternatives	*Male*	158	3.87	1.50	4.29*
	Female	243	3.18	1.68	
Intimacy	*Male*	158	5.15	1.10	-2.97*
	Female	243	5.47	1.02	
Self-Uncertainty	*Male*	158	2.40	1.56	3.83*
	Female	243	1.83	1.32	
Partner Uncertainty	*Male*	158	2.37	1.49	3.15*
	Female	243	1.91	1.31	
Relationship Uncertainty	*Male*	158	2.40	1.33	3.23*
	Female	243	1.96	1.31	
Self-Deceptive Enhancement	*Male*	158	3.50	2.30	2.17**
	Female	243	3.00	2.19	
Impression Management	*Male*	158	2.44	2.24	-.38
	Female	243	2.52	2.23	

*. $p < .01$

**. $p < .05$

Table 5: Means, Standard Deviations, and T-tests for Outcome Variables by Current Gender Identity

	Gender	*N*	*M*	*SD*	*t*
Commitment	*Men*	160	5.34	1.20	-6.41*
	Women	234	6.10	1.12	
Investment	*Men*	160	5.48	1.12	-3.28**
	Women	234	5.84	1.00	
Satisfaction	*Men*	160	5.46	1.20	-1.57
	Women	234	5.67	1.37	
Perceived Quality of Alternatives	*Men*	160	3.86	1.49	4.37*
	Women	234	3.15	1.69	
Intimacy	*Men*	160	5.13	1.10	-3.26**
	Women	234	5.49	1.03	
Self-Uncertainty	*Men*	160	2.45	1.58	4.43*
	Women	234	1.78	1.30	
Partner Uncertainty	*Men*	160	2.41	1.51	3.72*
	Women	234	1.87	1.28	
Relationship Uncertainty	*Men*	160	2.44	1.35	3.76*
	Women	234	1.93	1.28	
Self-Deceptive Enhancement	*Men*	160	3.46	2.31	1.76
	Women	234	3.05	2.20	
Impression Management	*Men*	160	2.39	2.24	-.72
	Women	234	2.56	2.26	

*. $p < .001$

**. $p < .01$

Table 6: Means and Standard Deviations for PGRD Dimensions by Biological Sex

	Sex	*N*	*M*	*SD*
PGRD - Close Other	*Male*	158	1.22	2.27
	Female	243	1.23	1.69
PGRD - Distant Other	*Male*	158	1.16	1.94
	Female	243	1.06	1.09
Magnitude	*Male*	158	1.11	1.85
	Female	243	.99	1.06
Type - Masculine	*Male*	158	-.14	1.14
	Female	243	-.14	.88
Type - Feminine	*Male*	158	.22	1.18
	Female	243	.09	.83
Direction	*Male*	158	-.08	.92
	Female	243	.05	.93

Table 7: Means and Standard Deviations for PGRD Dimensions by Current Gender Identity

	Gender	*N*	*M*	*SD*
PGRD - Close Other	*Men*	160	1.23	2.37
	Women	234	1.18	1.56
PGRD - Distant Other	*Men*	160	1.12	1.92
	Women	234	1.04	1.07
Magnitude	*Men*	160	1.09	1.84
	Women	234	.96	1.02
Type - Masculine	*Men*	160	-.14	1.12
	Women	234	-.13	.85
Type - Feminine	*Men*	160	.20	1.18
	Women	234	.10	.81
Direction	*Men*	160	-.06	.92
	Women	234	.03	.92

Table 8: Means and Standard Deviations for the SCQ and EDS Scales

	M	*SD*
SCQ	3.56	.88
EDS	1.95	1.06

Table 9: Means and Standard Deviations for the BIDR and Outcome Variables

	M	*SD*
Satisfaction	5.57	1.31
Investment	5.68	1.07
Commitment	5.78	1.21
Perceived Quality of Alternatives	3.45	1.64
Self-Uncertainty	2.05	1.45
Partner Uncertainty	2.09	1.40
Relationship Uncertainty	2.13	1.33
Relational Uncertainty	2.09	1.29
Intimacy	5.34	1.06
Self-Deceptive Enhancement	3.20	2.24
Impression Management	2.49	2.24

Table 10: Zero Order Correlations Among PGRD Items

	1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*
1. Self-perceived Femininity	1.00	-.83**	.88**	-.78**	.83**	-.72**
2. Self-perceived Masculinity	-.83**	1.00	-.75**	.88**	-.72**	.85**
3. Distant other - Femininity	.88**	-.75**	1.00	-.82**	.84**	-.71**
4. Distant other - Masculinity	-.78**	.88**	-.82**	1.00	-.74**	.85**
5. Close other - Femininity	.83**	-.72**	.84**	-.74**	1.00	-.82**
6. Close other - Masculinity	-.72**	.85**	-.71**	.85**	-.82**	1.00

***. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

Table 11: Zero Order Correlations Among PGRD Dimensions

	1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*
1. PGRD - Close Other	1.00	.38**	.85**	-.21**	.25**	-.05
2. PGRD - Distant Other	.38**	1.00	.75**	-.31**	.33**	-.01
3. Magnitude	.85**	.75**	1.00	-.31**	.36**	-.05
4. Type - Masculine	-.21**	-.31**	-.31**	1.00	-.56**	-.47**
5. Type - Feminine	.25**	.33**	.36**	-.56**	1.00	-.47**
6. Direction	-.05	-.01	-.05	-.47**	-.47**	1.00

***. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

Table 12: Zero Order Correlations Among Outcome Variables, EDS, and BIDR

	1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*	*9*	*10*	*11*
1. EDS	1.00	-.30**	-.38**	-.50**	.45**	-.28**	.56**	.52**	.49**	-.39**	-.30**
2. Satisfaction	-.30**	1.00	.65**	.63**	-.37**	.59**	-.53**	-.56**	-.63**	.39**	.25**
3. Investment	-.38**	.65**	1.00	.75**	-.38**	.63**	-.58**	-.53**	-.60**	.33**	.23**
4. Commitment	-.50**	.63**	.75**	1.00	-.53**	.63**	-.67**	-.55**	-.66**	.35**	.28**
5. Perceived Quality of Alternatives	.45**	-.37**	-.38**	-.53**	1.00	-.44**	.49**	.37**	.39**	-.19**	-.22**
6. Intimacy	-.28**	.59**	.63**	.63**	-.44**	1.00	-.54**	-.48**	-.60**	.34**	.31**
7. Self-Uncertainty	.56**	-.53**	-.58**	-.67**	.49**	-.54**	1.00	.76**	.76**	-.36**	-.26**
8. Partner Uncertainty	.52**	-.56**	-.53**	-.55**	.37**	-.48**	.76**	1.00	.84**	-.40**	-.26**
9. Relationship Uncertainty	.49**	-.63**	-.60**	-.66**	.39**	-.60**	.76**	.84**	1.00	-.41**	-.27**
10. Self-Deceptive Enhancement	-.39**	.39**	.33**	.35**	-.19**	.34**	-.36**	-.40**	-.41**	1.00	.63**
11. Impression Management	-.30**	.25**	.23**	.28**	-.22**	.31**	-.26**	-.26**	-.27**	.63**	1.00

***. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

Table 13: Regression coefficients from RQ5 (PGRD-close)

	β	*t*	*p*
(Constant)		11.219	.000
Length of relationship	-.149	-2.724	.007
Age	-.031	-.562	.575
Ethnicity	-.044	-.953	.341
Gender	-.206	-4.465	.000
Self-Deceptive Enhancement	-.328	-5.583	.000
Impression Management	-.064	-1.120	.264
PGRD-close	.143	.949	.343
Magnitude	-.174	-1.003	.316
Type	.249	1.066	.287
Direction	.082	1.242	.215
PGRD-close x Magnitude	.913	1.066	.287
PGRD-close x Type	-.132	-.614	.539
PGRD-close x Direction	-.121	-1.165	.245
Magnitude x Type	.409	.831	.407
Magnitude x Direction	.053	.418	.676
Type x Direction	-.338	-1.734	.084
PGRD-close x Magnitude x Type	-.671	-.686	.493
PGRD-close x Magnitude x Direction	-.469	-1.046	.296
PGRD-close x Type x Direction	.127	.677	.499
Magnitude x Type x Direction	-.431	-1.560	.119
PGRD-close x Magnitude x Type x Direction	.226	.534	.594

Table 14: Regression coefficients from RQ5 (PGRD-distant)

	β	*t*	*p*
(Constant)		9.515	.000
Length of relationship	-.132	-2.405	.017
Age	-.022	-.402	.688
Ethnicity	-.026	-.549	.584
Gender	-.232	-4.837	.000
Self-Deceptive Enhancement	-.336	-5.707	.000
Impression Management	-.052	-.895	.372
Sexual orientation	.079	1.671	.096
PGRD-distant	-.060	-.462	.644
Magnitude	.041	.233	.816
Type	.023	.117	.907
Direction	.006	.088	.930
PGRD-distant x Magnitude	-.549	-.598	.550
PGRD-distant x Type	-.045	-.145	.885
PGRD-distant x Direction	.001	.012	.990
Magnitude x Type	-.229	-.979	.328
Magnitude x Direction	-.022	-.161	.872
Type x Direction	-.080	-.440	.660
PGRD-distant x Magnitude x Type	.406	.422	.673
PGRD-distant x Magnitude x Direction	.396	1.105	.270
PGRD-distant x Type x Direction	-.004	-.016	.987
Magnitude x Type x Direction	.192	1.048	.295
PGRD-distant x Type x Direction	-.231	-.682	.496

Appendices

Appendix A: Perceived Gender Role Departure Scale

Scale Items

How masculine do you see yourself? → *a*
How feminine do you see yourself? → *b*

How masculine do you think your romantic partner sees you as? → *c*
How feminine do you think your romantic partner sees you as? → *d*

How masculine do you think people who you have just met see you as? → *e*
How feminine do you think people who you have just met see you as? → *f*

Sample Cases

Low PGRD

a	***b***	***c***	***d***	***e***	***f***
3	6	4	6	4	7

Medium PGRD

a	***b***	***c***	***d***	***e***	***f***
5	5	1	7	2	7

High PGRD

a	***b***	***c***	***d***	***e***	***f***
7	1	1	7	1	7

Appendix B: Calculating the Source Sub-dimension

Range : 0 = very little departure
12= very much departure

Close:
| *(a-b) – (c-d)* |

Distant
| *(a-b) – (e-f)* |

- *a - b* is a measure of self perceived gender role polarization; how dichotomously one sees themselves as endorsing one gender over another
- *c – d* is a measure of the perception of gender role departure in the eyes of a close other
- *e –f* is a measure of the perception of gender role departure in the eyes of a distant other
- Subtracting these two differences from each other produces a measure of how far apart individuals' perceptions of their gender dichotomy is from what they perceive their partners/distant others see their gender dichotomy as.

Example calculations with data for close:

Low:

=| (3-6) – (4-6)|
=|(-3) – (-2)|
=|-1|
=1

Medium:

=| (5-5) – (1-7) |
=| (0) – (-6) |
=|6|
= 6

High:
= | (1-7) – (7-1) |
=|(-6)-(6) |
=|-12|
= 12

Appendix C: Calculating the Magnitude Sub-dimension

$|[a - (\overline{c + e})] - [b - (\overline{d + f})]|$
Range: 0 = low magnitude
12 = high magnitude

- *a* represents individuals' perception of their own masculinity
- The average of *c*+*e* represents the aggregate masculinity that individuals' perceive occurs in the eyes of both their close and distant contact
- Subtracting this aggregate from individuals' creates a reflection of how closely aligned individuals' self perceptions and meta-perceptions of others are, since scores closer to 0 indicate more perfect alignment
- Subtracting the difference derived from the femininity scores from the masculinity scores creates an aggregate measure of how well individuals' self and meta-perceptions line up across both constructs, with lower scores again indicating increasingly accurate alignment

Example calculations for data with magnitude:

Low:

$=| [3 - (\overline{4 + 4})] - [6 - (\overline{6 + 7})] |$
=| [3 - 4] – [6 – 6.5] |
=| -1 - -.5 |
= |-.5|
= .5

Medium:

$=|[5 - (\overline{1 + 2})] - [5 - (\overline{7 + 7})]|$
=|[5-1.5] – [5-7]|
=|3.5- -2|
=|5.5|
= 5.5

High
$= |[7 - (\overline{1 + 1})] - [1 - \overline{(7 + 7)}]|$
= |[7-1] – [1-7]|
= | 6 - -6 |
= |12|
= 12

Appendix D: Calculating the Type Sub-dimension

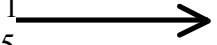
Masculine: $\overline{(c + e)} - a$
AND
Feminine: $\overline{(d + f)} - b$

M	F
0	0
1	0
0	1
1	1

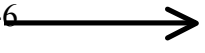
Type	
0	neither
1	masculine
2	feminine
3	both

- *c*+*e* represents individuals' averaged meta-perceptions of how masculine they are seen by close and distant others
- *d*+*f* represents individuals' averaged meta perceptions of how feminine they are seen by close and distant others
- By subtracting *a* and *b* from these averages, respectively, the resulting sum reflects the degree of difference between how individuals perceive themselves and how they perceive others to see them, with more extreme values representing greater degrees of misalignment between self-perceptions and individuals' meta-perceptions of others
- Comparing these resulting values to the *M* and *SD* derived from the sample will allow for identifying individuals who perceive that they are significantly departing from the masculine or feminine gender role

Fictional *M* = 3.5
Fictional *SD* = 2
Example calculations with data for type:

<u>Low:</u>
M: $\overline{(4 + 4)} - 3 = 1$ 
F: $\overline{(6 + 7)} - 6 = .5$ M = 1 ; F = 1; Type = 3

<u>Medium</u>:
M: $\overline{(1 + 2)} - 5 = -3.5$ 
F: $\overline{(7 + 7)} - 5 = 2$ M = 1 ; F = ; Type = 1

<u>High:</u>
M: $\overline{(1 + 1)} - 7 = -6$ 
F: $\overline{(7 + 7)}$ - 1 = 6 M= 1; F = 1; Type = 1

Appendix E: Calculating the Direction Sub-dimension

$(a+b) - [\overline{(c+d) + (e+f)}]$

- $a+b$ represents the intensity of individuals' self-perceived gender identity (both masculine and feminine)
- $c+d$ reflect this same intensity as individuals perceive close others to perceive it about them
- The same is true of $e+f$
- The average of $(c+d)$ and $(e+f)$ represents an aggregated view of individuals' meta-perceptions of the views of close and distant others regarding the intensity of their gender identity
- Subtracting this value from $(a+b)$ produces a measure of whether individuals perceive that their gender identity is exceeding or falling short of that which they perceive others to see their gender identity as

0 = neither direction
1 = falling short
2 = exceeding

Fictional M = -1
Fictional SD = .5

Example calculations for data with direction:
Low:

$= (3+6) - [\overline{(4+6) + (4+7)}]$
$= 9 - [10+11]$
$= 9 - 10.5$
= -1.5 → 0

Medium:
$= (5+5) - [\overline{(1+7) + (2+7)}]$
$= 10 - [8-9]$
$= 10 - 8.5$
= 1.5 → 2

High:
$= (7+1) - [\overline{(1+7) + (1+7)}]$
$= 8 - [8+8]$
$= 8 - 8$
= 0 → 2

Appendix F: Stigma Consciousness Questionnaires

Pinel's (1999) Stigma Consciousness Questionnaire

1. Stereotypes about women have not affected me personally.
2. I never worry that my behaviors will be viewed as stereotypically female.
3. When interacting with men, I feel like they interpret all my behaviors in terms of the fact that I am a woman.
4. Most men do not judge women on the basis of their gender.
5. My being female does not influence how men act with me.
6. I almost never think about the fact that I am female when I interact with men.
7. My being female does not influence how people act with me.
8. Most men have a lot more sexist thoughts than they actually express.
9. I often think that men are unfairly accused of being sexist.
10. Most men have a problem viewing women as equals.

Modified Version

In responding to the questions below, the phrase "**departs from gender roles**" refers to being perceived by others as **acting in ways that may not match typical ideas about what it means to be masculine or feminine**.

1. Stereotypes about people who depart from typical gender roles have not affected me personally.
2. I never worry whether my behaviors will be viewed as stereotypical of people who depart from typical gender roles.
3. When interacting with others, I feel like they interpret all of my behaviors in terms of whether I depart from typical gender roles.
4. Most people do not judge others on the basis of whether they depart from typical gender roles.
5. Whether I depart from typical gender roles does not influence how others act with me (*)
6. I almost never think about whether I depart from typical gender roles when I interact with others.
7. Whether I depart from typical gender roles does not influence how people act with me (*)
8. Most people have a lot more thoughts stereotyping those who depart from typical gender roles than they actually express.
9. I often think that people are unfairly accused of stereotyping those who depart from typical gender roles.
10. Most people have a problem viewing those who depart from typical gender roles as equals.

Appendix G: Everyday Discrimination Scale (Williams et al., 1997)

In responding to the questions below, the phrase "**departs from gender roles**" refers to being perceived by others as **acting in ways that may not match typical ideas about what it means to be masculine or feminine**.

How often on a day-to-day basis do you experience each of the following types of discrimination as a result of the way you do or do not depart from typical gender roles (1 = never, 7 = frequently).

1. You are treated with less courtesy than other people
2. You are treated with less respect than other people
3. You receive poorer service than other people at restaurants or stores.
4. People act as if they think you are not smart
5. People act as if they are afraid of you
6. People act as if they think you are dishonest
7. People act as if they think you are not as good as they are.
8. You are called names or insulted.
9. You are threatened or harassed

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[i] Foundational writings on mediation (i.e., Baron & Kenny, 1986) require a significant association between all variables be present in order to infer mediation. However more recent writings on the topic have indicated that this approach (often called the causal steps approach) is deeply flawed (Hayes, 2009) and that significant paths between all variables in the model need not be present in order for mediation to be inferred.